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THE LIGHTER SIDE OF SCHOOL LIFE.

BY IAN HAY.

III. SOME FORM-MASTERS.

I. THE NOVICE.

ARTHUR ROBINSON, B.A., late Exhibitioner of St Crispin's College, Cambridge, having obtained a First Class, Division Three, in the Classical Tripos, came down from the University at the end of his third year and decided to devote his life to the instruction of youth.

In order to gratify this ambition as speedily as possible, he applied to a scholastic agency for an appointment. He was immediately furnished with type-written notices of some thirty or forty. Almost one and all, they were for schools which he had never heard of; but the post in every case was one which the Agency could unreservedly recommend. At the foot of each notice was typed a strongly-worded appeal to him to write to the Headmaster, explaining first and foremost that he had *heard of this vacancy through our Agency.* After that he was to state his *degree (if any); if a member of the Church of England; if willing to participate in School games; if musical;* and so on. He was advised, if he thought it desirable, to enclose a photograph of himself.

A further sheaf of such notices reached him every morning for about two months; but as none of them offered him more than a hundred-and-twenty pounds a-year, and most of them a good deal less, Arthur Robinson, who was a sensible young man, resisted the temptation, overpowering to most of us, of seizing the very first opportunity of earning a salary,

however small, simply because he had never earned anything before, and allowed the notices to accumulate upon one end of his mantelpiece.

Finally he had recourse to his old College tutor, who advised him of a vacancy at Eaglescliffe, a great public school in the west of England, and by a timely private note to the Headmaster secured his appointment.

Next morning Arthur Robinson received from the directorate of the scholastic agency—the existence of which he had almost forgotten—a rapturous letter of congratulation, reminding him that the Agency had sent him notice of the vacancy upon a specified date, and delicately intimating that their commission of five per cent upon the first year's salary was payable on appointment. Arthur, who had long since given up the task of breasting the Agency's morning tide of desirable vacancies, mournfully investigated the heap upon the mantelpiece, and found that the facts were as stated. There lay the notice, sandwiched between a document relating to the advantages to be derived from joining the staff of a private school in North Wales, where material prosperity was guaranteed by a salary of eighty pounds per annum and social success by the prospect of meat-tea with the Principal and his family; and another, in which a clergyman (retired) required a thoughtful and energetic assistant (one hundred pounds a-year, non-resident) to aid him in the management of a small but select seminary for backward and epileptic boys.

Arthur laid the matter before his tutor, who informed him that he must pay up, and be a little less casual in his habits in future. He therefore wrote a reluctant cheque for ten pounds; and having thus painfully imbibed the first lesson that a schoolmaster must learn—namely, the importance of attending to details—departed to take up his appointment at Eaglescliffe.

He arrived the day before term began, to find that lodgings had been apportioned to him at a house in the village, half a mile from the School. His first evening was spent in making the place habitable. That is to say, he removed a number of portraits of his landlady's relatives from the walls and mantelpiece, and stored them, together with a collection of Early Victorian heirlooms — wool-mats and prism-laden glass vases—in a cupboard under the window-seat. In their place he set up fresh gods: innumerable signed photographs of young men, some in frames, some in rows along convenient ledges, others bunched together in a sort of wire entanglement much in vogue among the undergraduates of that time. Some of these photographs were mounted upon light-blue mounts, and these were placed in the most conspicuous position. Upon the walls he hung a collection of framed groups of more young men, with bare

knees and severe expressions, in some of which Arthur Robinson himself figured.

After that, having written to his mother and a girl in South Kensington, he walked up the hill in the darkness to the Schoolhouse, where he was to be received in audience by the Head.

The great man was sitting at ease before his study fire, and exhibited unmistakable signs of recent slumber.

"I want you to take Remove B, Robinson," he said. "They are a mixed lot. About a quarter of them are infant prodigies — Foundation Scholars —who make this form their starting-point for higher things; and the remainder are centenarians, who regard Remove B as a sort of scholastic Chelsea Hospital, and are fully prepared to end their days there. Stir 'em up, and don't let them intimidate the small boys into a low standard of work. Their subjects this term will be *Cicero de Senectute* and the *Alcestis*, without choruses. Have you any theories about the teaching of boys?"

"None whatever," replied Arthur Robinson frankly.

"Good! There is only one way to teach boys. Keep them in order: don't let them play the fool or go to sleep; and they will be so bored that they will work like niggers merely to pass the time. That's education in a nutshell. Good-night!"

Next morning Arthur Robinson invested himself in an extremely new B.A. gown, which seemed very long and voluminous after the tattered and attenuated garment which he had worn at Cambridge—usually twisted into a muffler round his neck—and walked up to School. (It was the last time he ever walked: thereafter, for many years, he left five minutes later, and ran.) Timidly he entered the Common Room. It was full of masters, some twenty or thirty of them, old, young, and middle-aged. As many as possible were grouped round the fire—not in the orderly, elegant fashion of grown-up persons; but packed together right inside the fender, with their backs against the mantelpiece. Nearly every one was talking, and hardly any one was listening to any one else. Two or three—portentously solemn elderly men—were conferring darkly together in a corner. Others were sitting upon the table or the arms of chairs, reading newspapers, mostly aloud. No one took the slightest notice of Arthur Robinson, who accordingly sidled into an unoccupied corner and embarked upon a self-conscious study of last term's time-table.

"I hear they have finished the new Squash Courts," announced a big man who was almost sitting upon the fire. "Take you on this afternoon, Jacker?"

"Have you got a court?" inquired the gentleman addressed.

"Not yet, but I will. Who is head of Games this term?"

"Etherington major, I think."

"Good Lord! He can hardly read or write, much less manage anything. I wonder why boys always make a point of electing congenital idiots to their responsible offices. Warwick, isn't old Etherington in your House?"

"He is," replied Warwick, looking up from a newspaper.

"Just tell him I want a Squash Court this afternoon, will you?"

"I am not a District Messenger Boy," replied Mr Warwick coldly. Then he turned upon a colleague who was attempting to read his newspaper over his shoulder.

"Andrews," he said, "if you wish to read this newspaper I shall be happy to hand it over to you. If not, I shall be grateful if you will refrain from masticating your surplus breakfast in my right ear."

Mr Andrews, scarlet with indignation, moved huffily away, and the conversation continued.

"I doubt if you will get a court, Dumaresq," said another voice—a mild one. "I asked for one after breakfast, and Etherington said they were all bagged."

"Well, I call that the limit!" bellowed that single-minded egotist, Mr Dumaresq.

"After all," drawled a supercilious man sprawling across a chair, "the courts were built for the boys, weren't they?"

"They may have been built for the boys," retorted Dumaresq with heat, "but they were more than half paid for by the masters. So put that in your pipe, friend Wellings, and——"

"Your trousers are beginning to smoke," interpolated Wellings calmly. "You had better come out of the fender for a bit and let me in."

So the babble went on. To Arthur Robinson, still nervously perusing the time-table, it all sounded like an echo of the talk which had prevailed in the Pupil Room at his own school barely five years ago.

Presently a fresh-faced elderly man crossed the room and tapped him on the shoulder.

"You must be Robinson," he said. "My name is Pollard, also of St Crispin's. Come and dine with me to-night, and tell me how the old College is getting on."

The ice broken, the grateful Arthur was introduced to some of his colleagues, including the Olympian Dumaresq, the sarcastic Wellings, and the peppery Warwick. Next moment a bell began to ring upon the other side of the quadrangle, as there was a general move for the door.

Outside, Arthur Robinson encountered the Head.

"Good morning, Mr Robinson!" (It was a little affectation of the Head's to address his colleagues as 'Mr' when in cap and gown: at other times his keynote was informal bonhomie.) "Have you your form-room key?"

"Yes, I have."

"In that case I will introduce you to your flock."

At the end of the Cloisters, outside the locked door of Remove B, lounged some thirty young gentlemen. At the sight

of the Head these ceased to lounge, and came to an attitude of uneasy attention.

The door being opened, all filed demurely in and took their seats, looking virtuously down their noses. The Head addressed the intensely respectable audience before him.

"This is Mr Robinson," he said gruffly. "Do what you can for him."

He nodded abruptly to Robinson, and left the room.

As the door closed, the angel faces of Remove B relaxed.

"A-a-a-a-a-ah!" said everybody, with a sigh of intense relief.

Let us follow the example of the Head, and leave Arthur Robinson, for the present, to struggle in deep and unfathomed waters.

II. THE EXPERTS.

Mr Dumaresq was reputed to be the hardest slave-driver in Eaglescliffe. His eyes were cold and china blue, and his voice was like the neighing of a war-horse. He disapproved of the system of locked form-rooms—it wasted at least forty seconds, he said, getting the boys in—so he made his head boy keep the key and open the door the moment the clock struck.

Consequently, when upon this particular morning Mr Dumaresq stormed into his room, every boy was sitting at his desk.

"Greek Prose scraps!" he roared, while still ten yards from the door.

Instantly each boy seized a sheet of school paper, and having torn it into four pieces selected one of the pieces and waited, pen in hand.

"*If you do this*," announced Mr Dumaresq truculently, as he swung into the doorway, "*you will be wise.*"

Every boy began to scribble madly.

"*If you do not do this*," continued Mr Dumaresq, "*you will not be wise. If you were to do this, you would be wise. If you were not to do this, you would not be wise. If you had done this, you would have been wise. If you had not done this, you would not have been wise.* Collect!"

The head boy sprang to his feet, and feverishly dragging the scraps from under the hands of his panting colleagues, laid them on the master's desk. Like lightning Mr Dumaresq looked them over.

"Seven of you still ignorant of the construction of the simplest conditional sentence!" he bellowed. "Come in this afternoon!"

He tossed the papers back to the head boy. Seven of them bore blue crosses, indicating an error. There may have been more than one mistake in the paper, but one was always enough for Mr Dumaresq.

"Now sit close!" he commanded.

"Sitting close" meant leaving comparatively comfortable and secluded desks, and crowding

in a congested mass round the blackboard, in such wise that no eye could rove or mouth gape without instant detection.

"*Viva voce* Latin Elegiacs!" announced Mr Dumaresq, with enormous enthusiasm. He declaimed the opening couplet of an English lyric. "Now throw that into Latin form. Adamson, I'm speaking to Y O U! Yes, that made you jump! Don't sit mooning there, gaper! Think! Think!

Come, lasses and lads, get leave of your dads—

Come on, man, come on!

—And away to the maypole hie!

Say something! Wake up! How are you going to get over 'maypole'? No maypoles in Rome. Tell him, somebody! 'Saturnalia'—not bad. (Crabtree, stand up on the bench, and look at me, not your boots.) Why won't 'Saturnalia' do? Will it scan? *Think!* Come along, come *along!*"

In this fashion he hounded his dazed pupils through couplet after couplet, until the task was finished. Then, dashing at the blackboard, he obliterated the result of an hour's labour with a sweep of the duster.

"Now go to your desks and write out a fair copy," he roared savagely.

So effective were Mr Dumaresq's methods of inculcation that eighteen out of his thirty boys succeeded in producing flawless fair copies. The residue were ferociously bidden to an "extra" after dinner. Mr Dumaresq's "extras" were famous. He held at least one every day, not infrequently for the whole form. He possessed the one priceless attribute of the teacher: he never spared himself. Other masters would set impositions or give a boy the lesson to write out: Dumaresq, denying himself cricket or squash, would come into his form-room and wrestle with perspiring defaulters all during a hot afternoon until the task was well and truly done. Boys learned more from him in one term than from any other master in a year; but their days were but labour and sorrow. During the previous term a certain particularly backward member of his form had incurred some damage—to wit, a fractured collar-bone—during the course of a house-match. The pain was considerable, and when dragged from the scrummage he was in a half-fainting condition. He revived as he was being carried to the Sanatorium.

"What's up?" he inquired mistily.

"Broken neck, inflammation of the lungs, ringworm, and chronic leprosy, old son," announced one of his bearers promptly. "You are going to the San."

"Good egg!" replied the injured warrior. "I shall get off Dummy's extra after tea!"

Then, with a contented sigh, he returned to a state of coma.

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By way of contrast, Mr Cayley.

As Mr Cayley approached his form-room, which lay round

a quiet corner, he was made aware of the presence of his pupils by sounds of turmoil; but being slightly deaf, took no particular note of the fact. Presently he found himself engulfed in a wave of boys, each of whom insisted upon shaking him by the hand. Some of them did so several times, but Mr Cayley, whom increasing years had rendered a trifle dim-sighted, did not observe this. Cheerful greetings fell pleasantly but confusedly upon his ears.

"How do you do, sir? Welcome back to another term of labour, sir! Very well, no thank you! Stop shoving, there! Don't you see you are molesting Mr Methuselah Cayley, M.A.? Permit me to open the door for you, sir! Now then, all together! Use your feet a bit more in the scrum!"

By this time the humorist of the party had possessed himself of the key of the door; but having previously stopped up the keyhole with paper, was experiencing some difficulty in inserting the key into the lock.

"Make haste, Woolley," said Mr Cayley gently.

"I fear the porter has inserted some obstruction into the interstices of the aperture, sir," explained Master Woolley, in a loud and respectful voice. "He bungs up the hole in the holidays — to keep the bugs from getting in," he added less audibly.

"What was that, Woolley?" asked Mr Cayley, thinking he had not heard aright.

Master Woolley entered with relish upon one of the standard pastimes of the Upper Fourth.

"I said some good tugs would get us in, sir," he replied, raising his voice, and pulling paper out of the lock with a buttonhook.

Mr Cayley, who knew that his ears were as untrustworthy as his eyes, but fondly imagined that his secret was his own, now entered his form-room upon the crest of a boisterous wave composed of his pupils; who, having deposited their preceptor upon his rostrum, settled down in their places with much rattling of desks and banging of books.

Mr Cayley next proceeded to call for silence, and when he thought he had succeeded, said—

"As our new Latin subject books have not yet been distributed, I shall set you a short passage of unprepared translation this morning."

"Would it not be advisable, sir," suggested the head boy— the Upper Fourth addressed their master with a stilted and pedantic preciosity of language which was an outrageous parody of his own courtly and old-fashioned manner — "to take down our names and ages, as is usually your custom at the outset of your infernal havers?"

"Of what, Adams?"

"Of your termly labours, sir," said Adams, raising his voice courteously.

Mr Cayley acquiesced in this proposal, and the form, putting their feet up on convenient ledges and producing refreshment from the secret recesses

of their persons, proceeded to crack nuts and jokes, while their instructor laboured with studious politeness to extract from them information as to their initials and length of days. It was not too easy a task, for every boy in the room was conversing, and not necessarily with his next-door neighbour. Once a Liddell and Scott lexicon (medium size) hurtled through space and fell with a crash upon the floor.

Mr Cayley looked up.

"Some one," he remarked with mild severity, "is throwing india-rubber."

Name-taking finished, he made another attempt to revert to the passage of unprepared translation. But a small boy, with appealing eyes and a wistful expression, rose from his seat and timidly deposited a large and unclean object upon Mr Cayley's desk.

"I excavated this during the holidays, sir," he explained; "and thinking it would interest you, I made a point of preserving it for your inspection."

Instant silence fell upon the form. Skilfully handled, this new diversion was good for quite half-an-hour's waste of time.

"This is hardly the moment, Benton," replied Mr Cayley, "for a disquisition on geology; but I appreciate your kindness in thinking of me. I will examine this specimen this afternoon, and classify it for you."

But Master Benton had no intention of permitting this.

"Does it belong to the glacial period, sir?" he inquired shyly. "I thought these scratches might have been caused by ice-pressure."

There was a faint chuckle at the back of the room. It proceeded from the gentleman whose knife Benton had borrowed ten minutes before in order to furnish support for his glacial theory.

"It is impossible for me to say without my magnifying-glass," replied Mr Cayley, peering myopically at the stone. "But from a cursory inspection I should imagine this particular specimen to be of an igneous nature. Where did you get it?"

"In the neck!" volunteered a voice.

Master Benton, whose cervical vertebræ the stone had nearly severed in the course of a friendly interchange of missiles with a playmate while walking up to school, hastened to cover the interruption.

"Among the Champion Pills, sir," he announced gravely.

"The Grampian Hills," said Mr Cayley, greatly interested. He nodded his head. "That may be so. Geologically speaking, some of these hills were volcanoes yesterday."

"There was nothing about it in the *Daily Mail* this morning," objected a voice from the back benches.

"I beg your pardon?" said Mr Cayley, looking up

"It sounds like a fairy tale, sir," amended the speaker.

"And so it is!" exclaimed Mr Cayley, the geologist in him aroused at last. "The whole history of Nature is a

fairy tale. Cast your minds back for a thousand centuries . . ."

The form accepted this invitation to the extent of dismissing the passage of unprepared translation from their thoughts for ever, and settling down with a grateful sigh, began to search their pockets for fresh provender. The seraph-like Benton slipped back into his seat. His mission was accomplished. The rest of the hour was provided for.

Twice during the previous five years Mr Cayley's colleagues had offered to present him with a testimonial. Though deeply gratified, he could never understand why.

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Mr Bull was a young master, and an international football-player. Being one of the few members of the Staff at Eaglescliffe who did not possess a first-class degree, he had been entrusted with the care of the most difficult form in the school —the small boys, usually known as The Nippers.

A small boy is as different from a middle-sized boy as chalk from cheese. He possesses none of the latter's curious dignity and self-consciousness. He has the instincts of the puppy, and appreciates being treated as such. That is to say, he is physically incapable of sitting still for more than fifteen minutes at a time; he is never happy except in the company of a drove of other small boys; and he is infinitely more amenable to the *fortiter in re* than to the *suaviter in modo* where the enforcement of discipline is concerned. Above all, he would rather have his head smacked than be ignored.

Mr Bull greeted his chattering flock with a hearty roar of salutation, coupled with a brisk command to them to get into their places and be quick about it. He was answered by a shrill and squeaky chorus, and having thrown open the form-room door, herded the whole swarm within, assisting stragglers with a genial cuff or two; the which, coming from so great a hero, were duly cherished by their recipients as marks of special favour.

Having duly posted up the names and tender ages of his Nippers in his mark-book, Mr Bull announced—

"Now we must appoint the Cabinet Ministers for the term."

Instantly there came a piping chorus.

"Please sir, can I be Scavenger?"

"Please sir, can I be Obliterator?"

"Please sir, can I be Window-opener?"

"Please sir, can I be Ink-slinger?"

"Please sir, can I be Coal-heaver?"

"Shut up!" roared Mr Bull, and the babble was quelled instantly. "We will draw lots as usual."

Lots were duly cast, and the names of the fortunate announced. Mr Bull was not a great scholar: some of the "highbrow" members of the Staff professed to despise his humble attainments. But he understood the mind of extreme

youth. Tell a small boy to pick up waste paper, or fill an ink-pot, or clean a blackboard, and he will perform these acts of drudgery with natural reluctance and shirk them when he can. But appoint him Lord High Scavenger, or Lord High Inkslinger, or Lord High Obliterator, with sole right to perform these important duties and power to eject usurpers, and he will value and guard his privileges with all the earnestness and tenacity of a permanent official.

Having arranged his executive staff to his satisfaction, Mr Bull announced—

"We'll do a little English literature this morning, and start fair on ordinary work this afternoon. Sit absolutely still for ten minutes while I read to you. Listen all the time, for I shall question you when I have finished. After that you shall question me—one question each, and mind it is a sensible one. After that, a breather; then you will write out in your own words a summary of what I have read. Atten-*shun!*"

He read a hundred lines or so of *The Passing of Arthur*, while the Nippers, restraining itching hands and feet, sat motionless. Then followed question time, which was a lively affair; for questions mean marks, and Nippers will sell their souls for marks. Suddenly Mr Bull shut the book with a snap.

"Out you get!" he said. "The usual run—round the Founder's Oak and straight back. And no yelling, mind! Remember, there are others." He took out his watch. "I give you one minute. Any boy taking longer will receive five thousand lines and a public flogging. Off!"

There was a sudden upheaval, a scuttle of feet, and then solitude.

The last Nipper returned panting, with his lungs full of oxygen and the fidgets shaken out of him, within fifty-seven seconds, and the work of the hour proceeded.

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Each master had his own methods of maintaining discipline. Mr Wellings, for instance, ruled entirely by the lash of his tongue. A schoolboy can put up with stripes, and he rather relishes abuse; but sarcasm withers him to the marrow. In this respect Mr Wellings' reputation throughout the school—he was senior mathematical master, and almost half the boys passed through his hands—was that of a "chronic blister."

Newcomers to his sets, who had hitherto regarded the baiting of subject-masters as a pleasant form of recuperation between two bouts of the Classics, sometimes overlooked this fact. If they had a reputation for lawlessness to keep up they sometimes endeavoured to make themselves obnoxious. They had short shrift.

"Let me see," Wellings would drawl, "I am afraid I can't recall your name for the moment. Have you a visiting-card about you?"

Here the initiated would

chuckle with anticipatory relish, and the offender, a little taken aback, would either glare defiantly or efface himself behind his book.

"I am addressing you, sir—you in the back bench, with the intelligent countenance and the black-edged finger-nails," Wellings would continue in silky tones. "I asked you a question just now. Have you a visiting-card about you?"

A thousand brilliant repartees would flash through the brain of the obstreperous one. But somehow, in Wellings' mild and apologetic presence, they all went either irrelevant or fatuous. He usually ended by growling, "No."

"Then what is your name—or possibly title? Forgive me for not knowing."

"Corbett." It is extraordinary how ridiculous one's surname always sounds when one is compelled to announce it in public.

"Thank you. Will you kindly stand up, Mr Corbett, in order that we may study you in greater detail?" (Mr Wellings had an uncanny knack of enlisting the rest of the form on his side when he dealt with an offender of this type.) "I must apologise for not having heard of you before. Indeed, it is surprising that one of your remarkable appearance should hitherto have escaped my notice in my walks abroad. The world knows nothing of its greatest men: how true that is! However, this is no time for moralising. What I wanted to bring to your distinguished notice is this—that you must not behave like a yahoo in my mathematical set. During the past ten minutes you have kicked one of your neighbours and cuffed another; you have partaken of a good deal of unwholesome and (as it came out of your pocket) probably unclean refreshment; and you have indulged in several childish and obscene gestures. These dare-devil exploits took place while I was writing on the blackboard; but I think it only fair to mention to you that I have eyes in the back of my head—a fact upon which any member of this set could have enlightened you. But possibly they do not presume to address a person of your eminence. I have no idea, of course, with what class of society you are accustomed to mingle; but here—*here*—that sort of thing is simply not done, really! I am so sorry! But the hour will soon be over, and then you can go and have a nice game of shove-halfpenny, or whatever your favourite sport is, in the gutter. But at present I must ask you to curb your natural instincts. That is all, thank you very much. You may sit down now. Observe from time to time the demeanour of your companions, and endeavour to learn from them. They do not possess your natural advantages in the way of brains and beauty, but their manners are better. Let us now resume our studies."

Mr Wellings used to wonder plaintively in the Common

Room why his colleagues found it necessary to set so many impositions.

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Lastly, Mr Klotz. Mr Klotz may be described as a Teutonic survival—a survival of the days when it was *de rigueur* to have the French language taught by a foreigner of some kind. Not necessarily by a Frenchman—that would have been pandering too slavishly to Continental idiosyncrasy—but at least by some one who could only speak broken English. Mr Klotz was a Prussian, so naturally possessed all the necessary qualifications.

His disciplinary methods were modelled upon those of the Prussian Army, of which he had been a distinguished ornament—a fact of which he was fond of reminding his pupils, and which had long been regarded by those guileless infants as one of the most valuable weapons in their armoury of time-wasting devices.

Mr Klotz, not being a resident master, had no special class-room or key; he merely visited each form-room in turn. He expected to find every boy in his seat ready for work upon his arrival; and as he was accustomed to enforce his decrees at the point of the bayonet—or its scholastic equivalent—sharp scouts and reliable sentries were invariably posted to herald his approach.

Behold him this particular morning marching into Remove A form-room, which was situated at the top of a block of buildings on the south side of the quadrangle, with the superb assurance and grace of a German subaltern entering a beer-hall.

Having reached his desk Mr Klotz addressed his pupils.

"He who round the corner looked when op the stairs I game," he announced, "efter lonch goms he!"

The form, some of them still breathless from their interrupted rag, merely looked down their noses with an air of seraphic piety.

"Who was de boy who did dat?" pursued Mr Klotz.

No reply.

"Efter lonch," trumpeted Mr Klotz, "goms eferypoty!"

At once a boy rose in his place. His name was Tomlinson.

"It was me, sir," he said.

"Efter lonch," announced Mr Klotz, slightly disappointed at being robbed of a holocaust, "goms Tomleenson. I gif him irrecular verps."

Two other boys rose promptly to their feet. Their names were Pringle and Grant. They had not actually given the alarm, but they had passed it on.

"It was me too, sir," said each.

"Efter lonch," amended Mr Klotz, "goms Tomleenson, Brinkle, unt Grunt. Now I take your names unt aitches."

This task accomplished, Mr Klotz was upon the point of taking up Chardenal's *First French Course*, when a small boy with a winning manner (which he wisely reserved for his dealings with masters) said politely:

"Won't you tell us about

the Battle of Sedan, sir, as this is the first day of term?"

The bait was graciously accepted, and for the next hour Mr Klotz ranged over the historic battlefield. It appeared that he had been personally responsible for the success of the Prussian arms, and had been warmly thanked for his services by the Emperor, Moltke, and Bismarck.

"You liddle Engleesh boys," he concluded, "you think your Army is great. In my gontry it would be noding—noding! Take it away! Vat battles has it fought, to compare——"

The answer came red-hot from thirty British throats:

"Waterloo!" (There was no "sir" this time.)

"Vaterloo?" replied Mr Klotz condescendingly. "Yes. But vere would your Engleesh army haf been at Vaterloo without Blucher?" He puffed out his chest. "Tell me dat, Brinkle!"

"Blucher, sir?" replied Master Pringle deferentially. "Who was he, sir?"

"You haf not heard of Blucher?" gasped Mr Klotz in genuine horror.

The form, who seldom encountered Mr Klotz without hearing of Blucher, shook their heads with polite regret. Suddenly a hand shot up. It was the hand of Master Tomlinson, who it will be remembered had already burned his boats for the afternoon.

"Do you mean Blutcher, sir?" he inquired.

"Blutcher? Himmel! Nein!" roared Mr Klotz. "I mean Blucher."

"I expect he was the same person, sir," said Tomlinson soothingly. "I remember him now. He was the Russian who——"

"Prussian!" yelled the patriotic Mr Klotz.

"I beg your pardon, sir—Prussian. I thought they were the same thing. He was the Prussian general whom Lord Wellington was relying on to back him up at Waterloo. But Blutcher—Blucher lost his way—quite by accident, of course—and did not reach the field until the fight was over."

"He stopped to capture a brewery, sir, didn't he?" queried Master Pringle, coming to his intrepid colleague's assistance.

"It was bad luck his arriving late," added Tomlinson, firing his last cartridge; "but he managed to kill quite a lot of wounded."

Mr Klotz had only one retort for enterprises of this kind. He rose stertorously to his feet, crossed the room, and grasping Master Tomlinson by the ears, lifted him from his seat and set him to stand in the middle of the floor. Then he returned for Pringle.

"You stay dere," he announced to the pair, "ontil the hour is op. Efter lonch——"

But in his peregrinations over the battlefield of Sedan Mr Klotz had taken no note of the flight of time. Even as he spoke the clock struck.

"The hour is up now, sir!" yelled the delighted form.

And they dispersed with tumult, congratulating Pringle and Tomlinson upon their

pluck, and themselves upon a most profitable morning.

But it is a far cry to Sedan nowadays. The race of Klotzes has perished, and their place is occupied by muscular young Britons, who have no reminiscences, and whose pronunciation is easier to understand.

IV. BOYS.

I. THE GOVERNMENT.

"There's your journey-money, Jackson. Good-bye, and a pleasant holiday!"

"Thank you, sir. The same to you!" replies Jackson dutifully.

They shake hands, and the House-master adds—

"By the way, I shall want you to join the prefects next term."

"Me, sir? Oh!"

"Endeavour to get accustomed to the idea during the holidays. It will make a big difference in your life here. I am not referring merely to sausages for tea. Try and think out all that it implies."

Then follows a brief homily. Jackson knows it by heart, for it never varies, and he has heard it quoted frequently, usually for purposes of derision.

"The prefect in a public school occupies the same position as the non-commissioned officer in the Army. He is promoted from the ranks; he enjoys privileges not available to his former associates; and he is made responsible to those above him not merely for his own good behaviour but for that of others. Just as it would be impossible to run an army without non-commissioned officers, so it would be impossible, under modern conditions, to run a public school without prefects."

Jackson shifts his feet uneasily, after the immemorial fashion of schoolboys undergoing a "jaw."

"But I want to *warn* you of certain things," continues the wise old House-master.

Jackson looks up quickly. This part of the exhortation is new. At least, he has never heard it quoted.

"You will have certain privileges: don't abuse them. You will have certain responsibilities: don't shirk them. And above all, don't endeavour to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. You will be strongly tempted to do so. Your old associates will regard you with suspicion—even distrust; and that will sting. In your anxiety to show to them that your promotion has not impaired your capacity for friendship, you may be inclined to stretch the Law in their favour from time to time, or even ignore it altogether. On the other hand, you must beware of over-officiousness towards those who are not your friends. A

little authority is a dangerous thing. So walk warily at first. That's all. Good-night, old man."

. . . . . .

They shook hands again, and Jackson returned soberly to his study, which he shared with his friend Blake. The two had entered the School the same day: they had fought their way up side by side from its lowest walks to a position of comparative eminence; and their friendship, though it contained no David and Jonathan elements — very few schoolboy friendships do — had survived the severe test of two years of study-companionship. Jackson was the better scholar, Blake the better athlete of the two. Now, one was taken and the other left.

Blake, cramming miscellaneous possessions into his grub-box in view of early departure on the morrow, looked up.

"Hallo!" he remarked. "You've been a long time getting your journey-money. Did the Old Man try to cut you down?"

"No. . . . He says I'm to be a prefect next term."

"Oh! Congratters!" said Blake awkwardly.

"Thanks. Has he made you one too?" asked Jackson.

"No."

"Oh. What rot!"

Presently Jackson's oldest friend, after an unhappy silence, rose and went out. He had gone to join the proletariat round the Hall fire. The worst of getting up in the world is that you have to leave so many old comrades behind you. And the worst of it is that the comrades frequently persist in believing that you are glad to do so.

Such is the cloak of Authority, as it feels to a thoughtful and sensitive boy who assumes it for the first time.

Of course there are others. Hulkins, for instance. In his eyes the prefectorial system was created for his express convenience and glorification. He opens his study door and bawls—

"Fa-a-a-a-ag!"

A dozen come running. The last to arrive is bidden to remove Hulkins' boots from his feet and bring slippers. The residue have barely returned to their noisy fireside when Hulkins' voice is uplifted again. This time he requires blotting-paper, and the last-comer in the panting crowd is sent into the next study to purloin some. Ten minutes later there is a third disturbance, and there is Hulkins howling like a lost soul for matches. And so with infinite uproar and waste of labour the great man's wants are supplied. It does the fags no harm, but it is very, very bad for Hulkins.

Frisby is another type. He is not afraid of assuming responsibility. He is a typical new broom. He dots the i's and crosses the t's of all the tiresome little regulations in the House. He sets impositions to small boys with great profusion, and sees to it that

they are shown up punctually. If it is his turn to take roll-call, he descends to the unsportsmanlike device of waiting upon the very threshold of the Hall until the clock strikes, and then coming in and shutting the door with a triumphant bang in the faces of those who had reckoned on the usual thirty seconds' grace. He ferrets out the misdemeanours of criminals of fourteen, and gibbets them. He is terribly efficient — but his vigilance and zeal stop suddenly short at the prospect of a collision with any malefactor more than five feet high.

Then there is Meakin. He receives his prefectship with a sigh of relief. For four years he has led a hunted and precarious existence in the lower walks of the House. His high-spirited playmates have made him a target for missiles, derided his style of running, broken his spectacles, raided his study, wrecked his collection of beetles, and derived unfailing joy from his fluent but impotent imprecations. Now, at last, he sees peace ahead. He will be left to himself, at any rate. They will not dare to rag a prefect unless the prefect endeavours to exert his authority unduly, and Meakin has no intention whatever of doing that. To Frisby, office is a sharp two-edged sword; to Meakin, it is merely a shield and buckler.

Then there is Flabb. He finds a prefect's lot a very tolerable one. He fully appreciates the flesh-pots in the prefect's room, and he feels that it is pleasant to have fags to whiten his cricket-boots and make toast for his tea. He maintains friendly relations with the rest of the House, and treats small boys kindly. He performs his mechanical duties — roll-call, supervision of Prep, and the like — with as little friction as possible. But he does not go out of his way to quell riots or put down bullying; and when any unpleasantness arises between the prefects and the House, Flabb effaces himself as completely as possible.

Finally, there is Manby, the head of the House. He is high up in the Sixth, and a good all-round athlete. He weighs twelve stone ten, and fears nothing — except a slow ball which comes with the bowler's arm. To him government comes easily. The House hangs upon his lightest word, and his lieutenants go about their business with assurance and despatch. He is a born organiser and a natural disciplinarian. His prestige overawes the unofficial aristocracy of the House — always the most difficult section. And he stands no nonsense. A Manby of my acquaintance once came upon twenty-two young gentlemen in a corner of the cricket-field, who, having privily abandoned the orthodox game arranged for their benefit that afternoon, were indulging in a pleasant but demoralising pastime known as "tip-and-run." Manby, addressing them

as "slack little swine, a disgrace to the House," chastised them one by one, and next half-holiday made them play tip-and-run under a broiling sun and his personal supervision from two o'clock till six.

A House with a Manby at the head of it is safe. It can even survive a weak House-master. Greater Britain is run almost entirely by Manbys.

Taking it all round, the prefectorial machine works well. It is by no means perfect, but it is infinitely more efficient than any other machine. The chief bar to its smooth running is the inherent loyalty of boys to one another, and their dislike of anything which savours of tale-bearing. Schoolboys have no love for those who go out of their way to support the arm of the Law, and a prefect naturally shrinks from being branded as a master's jackal. Hence, that ideal —a perfect understanding between a House-master and his prefects — is seldom achieved. What usually happens is that when the House-master is autocratically inclined, he runs the House himself, while the prefects are mere lay figures; and when the House-master is weak or indolent, the prefects take the law into their own hands and run the House, often extremely efficiently, with as little reference to their titular head as possible. He is a great House-master who can co-operate closely with his prefects without causing friction between the prefects and the House or the prefects and himself.

But sometimes an intolerable strain is thrown upon the machine—or rather, upon the most sensitive portions of it.

Look at this boy, standing uneasily at the door of his study, with his fingers upon the handle. Outside, in the passage, a riot is in progress. It is only an ordinary exuberant "rag": he himself has participated in many such. But the Law enjoins that this particular passage shall be kept perfectly quiet between the hours of eight and nine in the evening; and it is this boy's particular duty, as the only prefect resident in the passage, to put the Law into effect.

He stands in the darkness of his study, nerving himself. The crowd outside numbers ten or twelve, but he is not in the least afraid of that. This enterprise calls for a different kind of courage, and a good deal of it. Jackson is not a particularly prominent member of the House, except by reason of his office: others far more distinguished than himself are actually participating in the disturbance outside. It will be of no avail to emerge wrathfully and say, "Less row, there!" He said that three nights ago. Two nights ago he said it again, and threatened reprisals. Last night he named various offenders by name, and stated that if the offence was repeated he would report them to the House-master. To-night

he has got to do it. The revellers outside know this: the present turmoil is practically a challenge. To crown all, he can hear above the din, in the very forefront of battle, the voice of Blake, once his own familiar friend.

With Blake Jackson had reasoned privily only that afternoon, warning him that the House would go to pot if its untitled aristocracy took to inciting others, less noble, to deeds of lawlessness. Blake had replied by recommending his late crony to return to his study and boil his head. And here he was, leading to-night's riot.

What will young Jackson do? Watch him well, for from his action now you will be able to forecast the whole of his future life.

He may remain mutely in his study, stop his ears, and allow the storm to blow itself out. He may appear before the roysterers and utter vain repetitions, thereby salving his conscience without saving his face. Or he may go out and fulfil his promise of last night. It sounds simple enough on paper. But consider what it means to a boy of seventeen, possessing no sense of perspective, to tone down the magnitude of the disaster he is courting. Jackson hesitates. Then, suddenly—

"I'll be *damned* if I take it lying down!" he mutters.

He draws a deep breath, turns the handle, and steps out. Next moment he is standing in the centre of a silent and surly ring, jotting down names.

"You five," he announces to a party of comparatively youthful offenders, "can come to the prefects' room after prayers and be tanned. You three"—he indicates the incredulous Blake and two burly satellites—"will have to be reported. I'm sorry, but I gave you fair warning last night."

He turns on his heel and departs in good order to his study, branded—for life, he feels convinced—as an officious busybody, a presumptuous upstart, and worst of all, a betrayer of old friends. He has of his own free will cast himself into the nethermost hell of the schoolboy—unpopularity—all to keep his word.

And yet for acts of mere physical courage they give men the Victoria Cross.

II.—THE OPPOSITION.

To conduct the affairs of a nation requires both a Government and an Opposition. So it is with school politics. The only difference is that the scholastic Opposition is much franker about its true aims.

The average schoolboy, contemplating the elaborate arrangements made by those in authority for protecting him from himself—rules, roll-calls, bounds, lock-ups, magisterial discipline, and prefectorial supervision—decides that the ordering and management of

the school can be maintained without any active assistance from him, and plunges joyously into Opposition with all the *abandon* of a good sportsman who knows that the odds are heavily against him. He breaks the Law, or is broken by the Law, with equal cheerfulness.

The most powerful member of the Opposition is the big boy who has not been made a prefect, and is not likely to be made a prefect. He enjoys many privileges—some of them quite unauthorised—and has no responsibilities. He is one of the happiest people in the world. He has reached the age and status at which corporal punishment is supposed to be too degrading to be feasible: this immunity causes him to realise that he is a personage of some importance; and when he is addressed rudely by junior Form-masters, he frequently stands upon his dignity and speaks to his House-master about it. His position in the House depends firstly upon his athletic ability, and secondly, upon the calibre of the prefects. Given a timid set of prefects, and an unquestioned reputation in the football world, Master Bullock has an extremely pleasant time of it. He possesses no fags, but that does not worry him. I once knew a potentate of this breed who improvised a small gong out of the lid of a biscuit-tin, which he hung in his study. When he beat upon this with a tea-spoon, all within earshot were expected to (and did) come running for orders. Such as refrained were chastised with a toasting-fork.

Then comes a great company of which the House recks nothing, and of whom House history has little to tell—the Cave-Dwellers, the Swots, the Smugs, the Saps. These keep within their own lurking-places, sedulously avoiding the noisy conclaves which crowd sociably round the Hall fire. For one thing, the conversation there bores them intensely, and for another, they would seldom be permitted to join in it even if they desired to do so. The *rôle* of Sir Oracle is strictly confined to the athletes of the House, though the Wag and the Oldest Inhabitant are usually permitted to offer observations or swell the chorus. But the Cave-Dwellers, never.

The curious part about it is that not by any means all the Cave-Dwellers are "Swots." It is popularly supposed that any boy who exhibits a preference for the privacy of his study devotes slavish attention therein to the evening's "prep," thus stealing a march upon his more sociable and less self-centred brethren. But this is far from being the case. Many of the Cave-Dwellers dwell in caves because they find it more pleasant to read novels, or write letters, or develop photographs, or even do nothing, than listen to stale House gossip round the fire, or indulge in everlasting small cricket in a corridor. They are often the salt of the House, but they have no conception of the fact. They entertain a low opinion of themselves:

they never expect to rise to any great position in the world: so they philosophically follow their own bent and leave the glory and the praise to the athletes and their *umbræ*. It comes as quite a shock to many of them, when they leave school and emerge into a larger world, to find themselves not only liked but looked up to; while the heroes of their school days, despite their hairy arms and club ties, are now dismissed in a word as "hobbledehoys."

Then comes the Super-Intellectual—the "Highbrow." He is a fish out of the water with a vengeance, but he does exist at school—somehow. He congregates in places of refuge with others of the faith; and they discuss *The Nation* and *The English Review*, and mysterious individuals who are only referred to by their initials, as G. B. S. and G. K. C. Sometimes he initiates these discussions because they really interest him, but more often, it is to be feared, because they make him feel superior and grown-up. Somewhere in the school grounds certain youthful schoolmates of his, inspired by precisely similar motives but with different methods of procedure, are sitting in the centre of a rhododendron-bush smoking cigarettes. In each case the idea is the same—namely, a hankering after meats which are not for babes. But the smoker puts on no side about his achievements, whereas the "highbrow" does. He loathes the vulgar herd and holds it aloof. He does not inform the vulgar herd of this fact, but he confides it to the other highbrows, and they applaud his discrimination. Intellectual snobbery is a rare thing among boys, and therefore difficult to account for. Perhaps the pose is a form of reaction. It is comforting, for instance, after you have been compelled to dance the can-can in your pyjamas for the delectation of the Lower Dormitory, to foregather next morning with a few kindred spirits and discourse pityingly and scathingly upon the gross philistinism of the lower middle classes.

No, the lot of the æsthete at school is not altogether a happy one, but possibly his tribulations are not without a certain beneficent effect. When he goes up to Oxford or Cambridge he will speedily find that in the tolerant atmosphere of those intellectual centres the prig is not merely permitted to walk the earth but to flourish like the green bay-tree. Under the intoxicating effects of this discovery the recollection of the robust and primitive traditions of his old School—and the old School's method of instilling those traditions—may have a sobering and steadying effect upon him. No man ever developed his mind by neglecting his body; and if the memory of a coarse and degrading school tradition can persuade the Super-Intellectual to play hockey or go down to the river after lunch, instead of sitting indoors drinking liqueurs and discussing Maupassant with a coterie of the elect, then the can-can in the Lower Dormi-

tory has not been danced altogether in vain.

Then come the rank and file. There are many types. There is the precocious type, marked out for favourable notice by aptitude at games and attractive manners. Such an one stands in danger of being taken up by older boys than himself; which means that he will suffer the fate of all those who stray out of their proper station. At first he will be an object of envy and dislike; later, when his patrons have passed on elsewhere, he may find himself friendless.

At the opposite end of the scale comes the Butt. His life is a hard one, but not without its compensations; for although he is the target of all the practical humour in the House, his post carries with it a certain celebrity; and at any rate a Butt can never be unpopular. So he is safe at least from the worst disaster that can befall a schoolboy.

And there is the Buffoon. He is distinct from the Butt, because a Butt is usually a Butt *malgré lui*, owing to some peculiarity of appearance or temperament; whereas the Buffoon is one of those people who yearn for notice at any price, and will sell their souls "to make fellows laugh." You may behold him, the centre of a grinning group, tormenting some shy or awkward boy—very often the Butt himself; while in school he is the bugbear of weak masters. The larger his audience the more exuberant he becomes: he reaches his zenith at a breaking-up supper or in the back benches on Speech Day. One is tempted to feel that when reduced to his own society he must suffer severely from depression.

Then there is the Man of the World. He is a recognised authority on fast life in London and Bohemian revels in Paris. He is a patron of the drama, and a perfect mine of unreliable information as to the private life of the originals of the dazzling portraits which line his study—and indeed half the studies in the House. The picture-postcard, as an educative and refining influence, has left an abiding mark upon the youth of the present time. We of an older and more rugged civilisation, who were young at a period when actresses' photographs cost two shillings each, were compelled in those days to restrict our gallery of divinities to one or two at the most. (Too often our collection was second-hand, knocked down for sixpence at some end-of-term auction, or reluctantly yielded in composition for a long-outstanding debt by a friend in the throes of a financial crisis.) But nowadays, with the entire Gaiety chorus at a penny apiece, the youthful connoisseur of female beauty has emancipated himself from the pictorial monogamy (or at the most, bigamy) of an earlier generation. He is a polygamist, a pantheist. He can erect an entire feminine Olympus upon his mantelpiece for the sum of half-a-crown. And yet, bless him, he is just as unsophisticated as we used to be—no more and

no less. The type does not change.

Lastly, comes the little boy—the Squeaker, the Tadpole, the Nipper, what you will. His chief characteristic is terrific but short-lived enthusiasm for everything he undertakes, be it work, play, a friendship, or a private vendetta.

He begins by taking education very seriously. He is immensely proud of his first set of books, and writes his name on nearly every page, accompanied by metrical warnings to intending purloiners. He equips himself with a perfect arsenal of fountain-pens, rubber stamps, blue pencils, and ink-erasers. He starts a private mark-book of his own, to check possible carelessness or dishonesty on the part of his Form-master. Then he gets to work, with his books disposed around him and his fountain-pen playing all over his manuscript. By the end of a fortnight he has lost all his books, and having broken his fountain-pen, is detected in a pathetic attempt to write his exercise upon a sheet of borrowed paper with a rusty nib held in his fingers or stuck into a splinter from off the floor.

It is the same with games. Set a company of small boys to play cricket, and their solemnity at the start is almost painful. Return in half an hour, and you will find that the stately contest has resolved itself into a reproduction of the parrot-house at the Zoo, the point at issue being a doubtful decision of the umpire's. Under the somewhat confiding arrangement which obtains in Lower School cricket, the umpire for the moment is the gentleman whose turn it is to bat next: so litigation is frequent. Screams of "Get out!" "Stay in!" "Cads!" "Liars!" rend the air, until a big boy or a master strolls over and quells the riot.

The small boy's friendships, too, are of a violent but ephemeral nature. But his outstanding characteristic is a passion for organising secret societies of the most desperate and mysterious character, all of which come speedily to a violent or humiliating dissolution.

I was once privileged to be introduced into the inner workings of a society called "The Anarchists." It was not a very original title, but it served its time, for the days of the Society were few and evil. Its aims were sanguinary but nebulous; the rules consisted almost entirely of a list of the penalties to be inflicted upon those who transgressed them. For instance, under Rule XXIV. any one who broke Rule XVII. was compelled to sit down for five minutes upon a chair into the seat of which a pot of jam had been emptied. (Economists will be relieved to hear that the jam was afterwards eaten by the executioners, the criminal being very properly barred from participating.)

The Anarchists had a private code of signals with which to communicate with one another in the presence of outsiders—

in "Prep," for instance. The code was simplicity itself. A single tap with a pencil upon the table denoted the letter A; two taps, B; and so on. As may be imagined, Y and Z involved much mental strain; and as the transmitter of the message invariably lost count after fourteen or fifteen taps, and began all over again without any attempt either at explanation or apology, the gentleman who was acting as receiver usually found the task of decoding his signals a matter of extreme difficulty and some exasperation. Before the tangle could be straightened out a prefect inevitably swooped down and awarded both scientists fifty lines for creating a disturbance in Preparation.

However, The Anarchists, though they finished after the manner of their kind, did not slip into oblivion so noiselessly as some of their predecessors. In fact, nothing in their inky and jabbering life became them like their leaving of it.

One evening the entire brotherhood—there were about seven of them—were assembled in a study which would have held four comfortably, engaged in passing a vote of censure upon one Horace Bull, B.A., their Form-master. Little though he knew it, Bull had been a marked man for some weeks. The Czar of all the Russias himself could hardly have occupied a more prominent position in the black books of anarchy in general. To-day he had taken a step nearer his doom by clouting one Nixon minor, Vice-President of the Anarchists, on the side of the head.

It was during the geography hour. Mr Bull had asked Nixon to define a watershed. Nixon, who upon the previous evening had been too much occupied with his duties as Vice-President of The Anarchists to do much "Prep," had replied with a seraphic smile that a watershed was "a place to shelter from the rain." As an improvised effort the answer seemed to him an extremely good one; but Mr Bull had promptly left his seat, addressed Nixon as a "cheeky little hound," and committed the assault complained of.

"This sort of thing," observed Rumford tertius, the President, "can't go on. What shall we do?"

"We might saw one of the legs of his chair through," suggested one of the members.

"Who's going to do it?" inquired the President. "We'll only get slain."

Silence fell, as it usually does when the question of belling the cat comes up for practical discussion.

"We could report him to the Head," said another voice. "We might get him the sack for assault—even quod! We could show him Nixon's head, as evidence. It would be a sound scheme to make it bleed a bit before we took him up."

The speaker fingered a heavy ruler lovingly, but Mr Nixon edged coldly out of reach.

"Certainly," agreed the President. "Bashan ought to be stopped knocking us about in form."

"I'd rather have one clout over the earhole," observed an Anarchist who so far had not spoken, "than be taken along to Bashan's study and given six of the best. That is what it would come to. Hallo, Stinker, what's that?"

The gentleman addressed—a morose, unclean, and spectacled youth of scientific proclivities—was the latest recruit to the gang. He had been admitted at the instance of Master Nixon, who had pointed out that it would be a good thing to enrol as a member some one who understood "Chemistry and Stinks generally." He could be used for the manufacture of bombs, and so on.

Stinker had produced from his pocket a corked test-tube, tightly packed with some dark substance.

"What's that?" inquired The Anarchists in chorus. (They nearly always talked in chorus.)

"It's a new kind of explosive," replied the inventor with great pride.

"I hope it's better than that new kind of stinkpot you invented for choir-practice," remarked a cynic from the corner of the study. "That was a rotten fraud, if you like! It smelt more like lily-of-the-valley than any decent stink."

"Dry up, Ashley minor!" rejoined the inventor indignantly. "This is a jolly good bomb. I made it to-day in the Lab., while The Badger was trying to put out a bonfire at the other end."

"Where does the patent come in?" inquired the President judicially.

"The patent is that it doesn't go off all at once."

"We know *that!*" observed the unbelieving Ashley.

"Do you chuck it or light it?" asked Nixon.

"You light it. At least, you shove it into the fire, and it goes off in about ten minutes. You see the idea? If Bashan doesn't *see* us put anything into the form-room fire, he will think it was something wrong with the coal."

The Anarchists, much interested, murmured approval.

"Good egg!" observed the President. "We'll put it into the fire to-morrow morning before he comes in, and after we have been at work ten minutes or so the thing will go off and blow the whole place to smithereens."

"Golly!" gobbled The Anarchists.

"What about us, Stinker?" inquired a cautious conspirator. "Shan't we get damaged?"

Stinker waved away the objection.

"We shall know it's coming," he said, "so we shall be able to dodge. But it will be a nasty jar for Bashan."

There was a silence, full of rapt contemplation of to-morrow morning. Then the discordant voice of Ashley minor broke in.

"I don't believe it will work. All your inventions are putrid, Stinker."

"I'll fight you!" squealed the outraged scientist, bounding to his feet.

"I expect it'll turn out to

be a fire-extinguisher, or something like that," pursued the truculent Ashley.

"Hold the bomb," said Stinker to the President, "while I——"

"Sit down," urged the other Anarchists, drawing in their toes. "There's no room here. Ashley minor, dry up!"

"It won't work," muttered Ashley doggedly.

Suddenly a brilliant idea came upon Stinker.

"Won't work, won't it?" he screamed. "All right, then! We'll shove it into this fire now, and you see if it doesn't work!"

Among properly constituted Anarchistic Societies it is not customary, when the efficacy of a bomb is in dispute, to employ the members as a *corpus vile*. But the young do not fetter themselves with red-tape of this kind. With one accord Stinker's suggestion was acclaimed, and the bomb was thrust into the glowing coals of Rumford's study fire. The brotherhood, herded together within a few feet of the grate—the apartment measured seven feet by six—breathed hard and waited expectantly.

Five minutes passed, then ten.

"It ought to be pretty ripe now," said the inventor anxiously.

The President, who was sitting next the window, prudently muffled his features in the curtain. The others drew back as far as they could—about six inches—and waited.

Nothing happened.

"I am sure it will work all right," declared the inventor desperately. "Perhaps the temperature of this fire——"

He knelt down and began to blow upon the flickering coals. There was a long and triumphant sniff from Master Ashley.

"I said it was only a rotten stinkp——" he began.

BANG!

There is a special department of Providence which watches over the infant chemist. The explosion killed no one, though it blew the coals out of the grate and the pictures off the walls.

The person who suffered most was the inventor. He was led, howling but triumphant, to the Sanatorium.

"Luckily, sir," explained Rumford to Mr Bull a few days later, in answer to a kindly question as to the extent of the patient's injuries, "it was only his face."

(To be continued.)

FROM THE OUTPOSTS.

INTO THE DARK.

To most of those who live in India the word "Frontier" has been given a special meaning, and is regarded as if it was entirely confined to the "North-west Frontier" of India.

It is only of late years that our attention has been drawn to our other Frontier, the North-east, where the border of our Indian Empire marches for some hundreds of miles with that of the Republic of China.

The two areas could not be more dissimilar. In the North-west the physical features are rugged, rocky hills; stony, waterless nullahs; mud villages surrounded by small green patches of cultivation, hardly wrung from the unyielding soil; intense cold in winter, terrible heat in summer; a land whose very inhospitality has bred a clean-featured, hardy race, whose lives are cheap and whose habitude is one long raid and foray for mere existence.

On the North-east the hills become mighty mountains, whose summits are capped with snow for many months of the year, whose slopes are abrupt and clothed with primeval forest. Torrential rains hold their sway for the majority of the year, a damp heat rules the summer and a pleasant temperature the winter. Rivers and streams roar down their beds a succession of foaming rapids; villages, whose huts are built of bamboo-matting and thatch, nestle half hidden in the jungle, and the people are less given to a raider's life, since they can win a living from the land. Indeed their poverty is due more to their disinclination to work than to an unfruitful soil.

The scene of our tale is cast in one of the remotest valleys of this area—one, till lately, untrod by the white man, and indeed merely a name even to the peoples that live in its close proximity.

A bright winter's day was drawing to its close when a British Survey party reached the village of Jatta in the Ramping valley.

The Political Officer and the officer commanding his escort were the only two white men. Barnes, the former, a well-known figure in North Burma, one of those rough-and-ready politicals who have carved out our Empire in the East—about forty, hard-headed, long thinking, energetic, and painstaking, strong in his dealings with the natives of the country, whose language he was an adept in, and whose characters were an open book to him, he had made his name in such expeditions—going forth into the unknown, with restricted powers and great responsibility, but endowed with a determination to probe into the recesses of nature and bring these lands

under the Flag. Strahan, the commander of his escort, was a younger man, just an average specimen of that best of all services the Indian Cavalry—the officers of which might almost be termed the "handy men" of the Army, in that, wherever there is a job to be done there will be found one of them—ready even to forsake his beloved horse, to tramp over the most difficult country on the face of the earth, if only it leads to a "Chance,"—Somaliland, South Africa, Burma, India, China, all bear testimony to the ubiquity of the Indian cavalry officer. The advance party of the sturdy little Gurkhas had reached the selected village, the Gurkha officer had posted the pickets, shelters were being erected, and a steaming kettle showed that the "at-once-to-be-demanded" tea was being prepared, before Barnes and Strahan with the main party reached camp.

It had been a long and tiring march, most of it spent in clambering along the steep slopes running down to the river, — sometimes crawling along a rocky ledge, with a "drop into nothing beneath you," at others surmounting a rise or fall in the track by climbing up or down a log-ladder, the latter term a euphemism for a tree-trunk put up on end, with roughly cut steps in it, which are characteristic of the "Royal Road" of these parts. As they neared camp, Thomas, the Madrasi cook, hurriedly began breaking eggs anticipating the shouts of "Ekdum Chae Lao—Barah anda Omelette," or "Bring tea at once—a twelve-egg omelette," that burst from the tired men's lips. The omelette soon disappeared, to be followed as quickly by one of the same size, — two pots of tea and some bread and jam were all devoured, in almost silence, before the pangs of hunger were assuaged.

Then both men having changed into dry clothes, a necessary precaution in that fever-stricken country, Strahan entered Barnes' hut, note-book and pencil in hand, ready for the daily task of attempting to extract information.

The headmen of the village were announced, two fine-looking men, mongolian in type, with long pigtails, clothed in long loose cloaks reaching to the knee, pyjamas, black skull-caps with a red button, and most of all "dirt."

There was a slight altercation caused by the sentry insisting on the two Lisus discarding their formidable two-handed swords before approaching the Political Officer, in front of whose tent fluttered the "Union Jack" as a mark of his official position.

"Now for my contribution to the 'Daily Liar,'" commented Strahan, when the headmen approached carrying a bowl of rice and some eggs as presents.

"For heaven's sake, old man, insist on a couple of fowls. I am just fed up of bully-beef, and so are you; besides, if you don't insist on these fellows bringing fowls the custom of not doing so will spread."

"Right you are," said Barnes, and turning to his interpreter he told him to ask the headmen why they had brought no fowls. The question was put, both men removed their pipes from their mouths, oiled their tongues with the usual expectoration, and with one accord began to make excuse.

"There are no fowls — our fowls are all dead—owing to unusual sickness they have all been sacrificed to the Spirits," and so on *ad lib.*

"How long, how long and how often," murmured Strahan, while Barnes merely repeated the question in a sterner tone, and ordered the missing delicacies to be brought at once—adding as an inducement a series of blood-curdling threats, which were doubtless made still more picturesque by the interpreter in transition.

Finding that evasion was of little use, one of the headmen disappeared and shortly returned with two thin and scraggy birds.

Barnes protested at once that "Such were not fit for 'Duas' or Lords," and after a further series of protestations on their part and threats on the part of the interpreter, a villager, who was standing by, was signalled to, and produced a more eatable-looking bird from under his coat.

Barnes then accepted the gifts, in his official capacity, and, in return, presented the headman with their equivalent in rupees—thus the purchase of the necessaries of life was clothed with oriental imagery and became an exchange of presents!

"And now to work," said Barnes, and turning to the headman he inquired of him his father's name, that of his clan, his own name, that of the village and the boundaries of the land that was worked by the villagers,—all of this information was duly inscribed on to an Official Form, headed with the Royal Arms, and signed by Barnes as representing the far-off Lieut.-Governor of Burma.

Before handing the headman his appointment Order, Barnes inquired if the raiding band of Chinese that had lately been in the village had given him any such Order. This question was met with the stoutest denials, only to be upset by Barnes' chief interpreter producing the order in question, which he had just discovered by searching in the headman's hut.

This dramatic proof of their absolute lack of truth did not upset the imperturbable Lisus, —who merely expectorated again — while Barnes and Strahan were too used to the daily situation even to smile.

However, Barnes confiscated the said document in the name of His Majesty, and with due dignity handed the new Order to the headman, cautioning him to produce it to all British officers when required to do so. He stated that he himself would return the following year and would expect to see it—and threatened him with dire punishment if he did not preserve it as his life.

The Lisu, again expectorating, put the letter in his wallet. He was obviously unimpressed, but as he had received similar instructions the previous night, when handed the first Order by the raider chieftain, doubtless he felt that it was all a game in which he was the victim of chance, so why worry? Barnes continued his interrogation by asking, "When did the Chinese leave this village?"

"Two days ago they left, and they slept that night at the next village."

So glib a reply was in itself suspicious. "Where are they now?"

"At Ningwachi, to-night."

"Where is Ningwachi?"

"Five days' march from here."

"Rather a long way to go in two days, isn't it?"

"Oh yes, but they were marching very light."

"Well, come along, show me by a plan where the villages that are on the road up the valley lie."

The Lisu at once picked up some sticks and stones and drew a rough plan on the ground, showing several villages and two rivers. The larger of the latter he said was the Ramping, the smaller the Ning Wang, while at the confluence of the two streams he said was Ningwachi, the next halting-place.

"This looks like business," said Strahan. "The Ning Wang and Ramping confluence has now been shown us by three men in their plans, and it appears as if we should reach it to-morrow."

"But this beastly village of Ningwachi is on the right bank according to this man, and on the left according to the others. How the devil is one to find out anything?"

"Oh, you are too particular. You can't expect these fellows to tell the truth, even when they try to do so."

"Where are the Chinamen to-night?" Barnes continued.

"Sleeping at the next camp —Ningwachi," was the reply.

"Ye gods! that is three different answers in a quarter of an hour," said Strahan. "Really, Barnes, we ought to put thumbscrews on to all these chaps."

And thus the interrogation went on until dark—lie following lie—denial following denial —at once to be contradicted by an assertion diametrically opposite, until the heads of both Britishers were in a whirl.

At length, confident that he would get nothing definite out of them, Barnes closed the interview by ordering the headmen to produce ninety coolies next morning, and then they were allowed to go away.

With the fall of night the cold grew intense, and both men donned their coats, warm British, and Balaclava caps: Barnes wearing his, with his face through the opening, looked like a Knight Templar of old in chain-mail headdress.

Strahan now went round the sentries to see that they were

well posted and alert, and to give the picket commanders the news that the Chinese were reported to be near at hand. On his return to the shelters dinner was served.

"Oh, Thomas mine," said Strahan, "what have we got to-night? Julienne—oysters—roast partridge — pêche de Melba — and Mousse de Jambon? Oh ye shades of the Carlton! how I long to be with you and all your delights! Come along, Barnes, old thing; to our muttons, or rather our chicken broth—chicken roast, mustard leaves, and apple rings — food that, after all these months of sameness, makes even my aching and hungry stomach revolt."

Dinner was quickly served, and the two men ate like hungry hunters while they discussed the pros and cons as to the position of the Chinese.

"It seems to me," said Strahan, "that we may easily be up against it. Here we are with thirty men and our two valiant selves. A party of these raiders, reported to be twenty strong, is possibly within a march of us; another party, fifty strong, is a few days' distant, and how many more there are we don't know. This relying on local coolies is a splendid saving to Government, but it is deuced like gambling with men's lives, as it forces us to move in small parties; while, to add to our difficulties, we are groping in the unknown. The Fog of War, indeed! Why, this is the darkness that can be felt!"

"Anyhow," said Barnes, "we must shove on and see what happens."

"I quite agree there is nothing else to do; but what I say is, that I wish some of the Big-wigs were here to shove along first and clear up the situation for us. It is all very well for you. If we are successful, yours is the kudos; if we fail, mine the blame. Not that that need worry me, as, if we don't pull through, we shall leave our bones in this delightful valley."

"Well, well, we are the pawns in the Great Game, and, as such, we can't do more than protest against the way things are done. We have both done that, and they know what we think; and with the usual reliance on the man on the spot that the British are renowned for, they treat our opinions with contempt."

Tired out by the long march, after discussing a pipe and a glass of whisky worth its weight in gold, the two began to nod, and with a cheery Good-night they turned in.

Next morning reveille sounded at 5 A.M., breakfast was swallowed with what relish they could bring to the feast, and at 6 o'clock, the coolies having collected, the march began.

As Barnes had to visit a village off the main track, ten men went with him and Strahan as a guard, the re-

mainder, under the command of the Gurkha officer, were ordered to march steadily in the direction of Ningwachi. Shortly before noon, the two Englishmen having finished their detour, were rapidly catching up the coolies and their escort, when they met a stray villager.

He was at once detained and questioned—Barnes assisting the man's eloquence by showing him his revolver. The Lisu eventually said that the Chinese had slept the previous night at Ningwachi, and had been getting ready to leave the village when he had left early that morning.

"This really does look like business," said Strahan; "there can be no object in this man lying. We had better push on and join the baggage."

Barnes agreed, and the little party began to travel as fast as they could. Shortly after this another man was met bearing a letter in Chinese characters. Neither Barnes, Strahan, nor their interpreters were able to decipher this, but the messenger said that the Chinese were actually still at Ningwachi.

They hurried on again to overtake the coolies, and shortly afterwards, as they reached the crest of a spur, they saw them on the farther slope of an intervening ravine. Strahan shouted to the escort to halt until he arrived. When they met the Gurkha officer they told him what news they had got. The men, who up till then had been listless with fatigue, realising that something was in the wind, began to look alive, and those near Strahan crowded round him as he gave his orders to the Gurkha officer. The latter was told to assume charge of the advance party and to move slowly forward in the direction of the village, taking all proper precautions and keeping touch with the main party.

The coolies were closed up—parties told off to the rear and flanks, and the march was resumed, every one alert at the chance of a scrap.

An hour went by as they toiled slowly over the difficult ground, the advance party searching as carefully as the steep slopes allowed.

Then a message came back from the Gurkha officer that a Chinaman had been met who wished to see the Civil Sahib Bahadur, and that he had halted the men until Strahan and the Civil officer came up.

Barnes and Strahan hurried forward, and shortly afterwards reached the spot where a Chinaman, in a rough blue uniform, was standing. He met them with folded hands and a deep bow.

On being questioned as to what he wanted, he said—

"My chief sends his compliments to the white officers, and hopes to meet them shortly."

"Where is your chieftain now?"

"In the next village, awaiting your Honour."

"I will see him when I arrive and have had some rest and food."

"That is as your Honour pleases."

"Who are you?"

"I am a clerk."

"Then let us proceed, as, being a big official, I have no communication to make to so small a man as yourself."

While this conversation was going on, the Subadar had placed himself behind the Chinaman, and Strahan had been much amused to see him signalling to the sepoys quietly to surround the messenger. The men did this nonchalantly and with as little fuss as possible, but the Chinaman doubtless noticed the movement, and it must have been a great strain on his nerves, not knowing what was going to happen to him; however, with true celestial phlegm, he never turned a hair or even looked behind him to see what was going on. The old Subadar was for making certain of one of the raiders anyhow, and for taking no chances about it; but, as he was a messenger, it was obviously impossible to seize him, and Strahan told him to hurry back to his chief and give him the message that Barnes had sent him.

The small force then pushed on as quickly as possible towards their destination, but taking every precaution in case of ambush. Owing to the delay necessary to allow these precautions being taken, the Chinaman soon outdistanced the leading party and was lost to sight.

On reaching the vicinity of the village, a coolie that was with them pointed out to Strahan the hut in which the Chinese had slept; a squad was sent to seize a spur that commanded this hut, and then they approached, a little excited as to the meeting that they expected to have. What was their disappointment to find that the birds had flown!

On looking down the slope towards the river they could see the lying clerk hurrying away, and, on the farther slope, a couple more armed Chinamen walking along the path towards a village some two miles off, in which, on the crest-line of the spur on which it was built, some half-dozen figures with rifles could easily be distinguished.

Barnes' and Strahan's language was sweet to hear. However, as it was 4.30 P.M. and the baggage was not yet up, the only thing to be done was to decide to camp there and to discuss further plans. Pickets were at once put out and ordered to entrench themselves — the Union Jack was hoisted—shelters built and the fires lighted, so that by the time the coolies arrived everything was getting ship-shape.

The two Englishmen discussed the situation earnestly. It was obvious that this game of following my leader, a march behind the raiders, was useless; it was equally obvious that, as they travelled lighter, it was hopeless to attempt to overtake them,—while every march brought them nearer to their main body that was reported to be in rear.

Both agreed that the best solution was a night march and surprise. Against this

scheme there were several objections,—the country was wild and quite unknown to them—the descent to the river was very steep, and the rise from it on the opposite bank equally so—they would have to trust to a local guide—no reconnaissance at all was possible, as success depended on surprise; any attempt to reconnoitre would give away their intention—also, as could be seen, the only approach to where the Chinese were was along a narrow path, so that, if surprise failed, the losses in the assault would be considerable. However, it did not take Strahan long to decide that he must take the risk, and it was arranged that they should start at ten o'clock; till then no one was to be told what was intended, so as to minimise any chance of the scheme being divulged.

The only instructions that Strahan gave to his men were, that he would inspect all ranks at "Alarm Posts" at ten o'clock.

The two officers quite realised that the attempt to surprise the raiders was a very risky business, and they spent the evening arranging their papers and instructing each other what was to be done if either happened to be killed.

Dinner was a quieter meal than usual, and was ended with a toast to "Success."

At ten o'clock Strahan went quietly out to the men's shelters, and, speaking to each man individually, he instructed them to creep out and "fall in" on the path some fifty yards away and below the crest of the spur.

The gallant little sepoys entered into the spirit of the enterprise, and not a sound was heard as they stole down to the rendezvous. The Gurkha officer and 24 men were told off as the attacking party, 5 men being left behind as a guard to the camp, needless to say much to their disgust.

At 10.30 Strahan walked into Barnes' shelter to tell him that he was ready; the latter, taking a couple of sepoys and his interpreters, entered the headman's hut and demanded the latter's son as a guide. There was a little difficulty in persuading the young man that he would come to no harm, but eventually he consented to go quietly and to point out the hut in which the Chinese were sleeping. He was promised a reward, and also assured that the fact that he had given assistance would be kept secret. He was insistent about the latter promise, as, he said, if it were known that he had helped the British, supposing that any damage was done to the other village, then, when the British left the valley, that village would wreak vengeance on his.

Now all was ready,—the guide was attached to the leading sepoy by a rope that passed round both their waists—then came another sepoy—then Strahan, followed by Barnes and his interpreters, then the remaining sepoys, brought up in the rear by the Gurkha officer.

The little party moved off

silently, with hearts high with hope and beating loudly with excitement; talking and smoking were forbidden—the only sounds were the whispers of "Close up, Close up," which were at intervals passed along, and curses muttered at the frequent falls that punctuated the advance.

"Into the Dark," in very truth—a pitch-black night—an unknown track—an unreliable guide—and at the end possibly a watchful foe!

No wonder that the two Englishmen felt their responsibility, for a few hours now would spell success or disaster, —no man goes lightly to such an encounter.

As they moved down the rocky path a light appeared, seemingly only a hundred yards away, and moving directly towards them. "Were they discovered?" The sepoys dived rapidly into the jungle at the side of the path to hide, while the two Englishmen waited the approach of the torch-bearer.

A few moments elapsed and then Barnes gave a low laugh, as it was now evident that the light was on the farther bank of the river, at least half a mile away from them,—such tricks does the imagination play on highly-strung nerves.

On! On! Down! Down! they went—groping their way with their sticks—diving involuntarily headlong into the jungle—sliding painfully over the rocks — tripping — stumbling—falling.

About midnight they reached the river: a patrol had visited this early in the evening, and had reported that the crossing was a difficult one, by means of a single log-bridge reaching from rock to rock.

Strahan crawled along it, wondering when he was going to fall into the water that roared a few feet below—the noise increased and exaggerated by the stillness of the night.

He suddenly whispered, "Here goes, Barnes; I can't feel any foothold, so I am going to drop and trust to luck." A push off, drop and splash, and then he muttered, "It is all right, the log is only about eighteen inches under water; warn the men, though, as the stream is running strong. Here you are, here is a hand—but this water is damned cold, and I am wet through to the waist."

The party crossed slowly—a little excitement was caused by two men falling into the water, but luckily they fell off the bridge at a spot where the water was shallow, and were none the worse for their fall except for a ducking. This manœuvre took a good deal of time, and it was one o'clock before the whole party was across.

A halt was ordered, and the object of the march was explained to the men, and Strahan gave his orders as to how he wished the manœuvre carried out. Fearing that indiscriminate firing would be more dangerous to his own party than to the enemy, he impressed on the sepoys that no man was to load unless he got definite orders to do so

from Strahan himself. Four sections of five men each were told off, and each section detailed to go direct to a definite side of the hut, and five men were detailed as a personal guard to Barnes and Strahan.

Now the ascent began—the most difficult portion of the march. On the direct route lay two villages; it was necessary in some way to avoid passing through these, as unless they did so they would inevitably arouse the village dogs, and their barking would wake up the villagers, and all hope of a surprise would be lost. It all depended on the guide.

Up they went a few yards, then sharp to the left, along the side of the slope by means of a narrow field-track, then across a wooden foot-bridge over a stream, into which Strahan fell; then the guide dived upwards into the jungle, his instinct apparently keeping him in the right direction. Scratch—tear—shove—push—fall—stumble—up again and on—so, they proceeded, until they reached another path that was located by the guide feeling for it with his fingers! "Halt! Close up," was the order passed down. A low whistle from the Gurkha officer signified that they were all up, and then on they went again.

And so,—stumbling—cursing—slipping—but ever pressing forward, they went ahead.

"Carefully in front," came a hoarse whisper from Strahan; "here is a village; keep below the bushes on the outskirts, and move as quietly as you can."

One by one they crept by —"Crack" went a twig,—every one stood still, anxiously awaiting the bark of an aroused dog; then came the murmur of voices, and there was a light in a hut near by; they all paused, wondering if they were heard. No! all was well so far.

On they went, tiptoeing with excitement—hearts beating—blood pulsing—a long five minutes, and then a breath of relief; all were clear and unnoticed.

Again the guide led them down a bypath, then up through the jungle, and so the march went on.

Crash! a clatter of stones and falling bodies in front.

"Has he got away?" said Strahan, thinking that the guide had escaped.

"All right, sahib," came a voice from below. "Phut—phut," as the man spat mud out of his mouth. "It is all right, sahib; I did not let go of the rope."

"Shah bash, Jawan" ("Well done, my lad").

On, on they went.

Slip, slide, crash behind.

"What is that? Barnes, where are you?"

"Here I am, down the khud; give us a hand, quick—I am slipping."

Strahan waved his stick in the direction of the sound, and luckily hit Barnes' hand almost at once, and he was hauled up.

Forward again.

And so they trudged along —two miles of toiling up hill, a very tiring task to men who had been going practically all the day, but spurred on by the excitement they all kept up.

"Hurry on, Strahan," said Barnes, "I can see the lights in the village; they are beginning to move about."

"Steady, old man, we must bring all the men up together; don't get excited." At length they began to approach the vicinity of the village. As they drew near the spot where the sentry had been seen at sunset watching the track, the main party was halted and whispered orders passed down, "Fix bayonets." Strahan, revolver in hand, accompanied by his orderly, crawled forward on hands and knees to stalk the sentry. Cold work on an empty stomach. In the pitch darkness every shadow becomes a figure, every whisper of the breeze a footstep, move one never so carefully, but the excited ear imagines that the world itself must hear the movement; and then the expectation of a sudden bang, blaze, and a bullet for "morning tea" is not an amusing anticipation!

The two men scouted the small granary, near which they expected the sentry to be standing, but they found no one there.

With a sigh of relief Strahan moved forward towards the hut in which he believed the Chinamen to be, — stealthily they approached, on all-fours. "Ahem"—a man cleared his throat,—Strahan peered into the darkness but could see no one. It was evidently the sentry, who must be standing in the verandah of the hut towards the side of which they were crawling.

A low whistle and Barnes came up with the Lisu guide, who indicated that this was the hut in which the enemy were sleeping. Another whistle and the little Gurkhas doubled forward, each section going straight to its appointed position.

As they did so, a shout from the verandah from the sentry and a rattle of feet along the bamboo floor showed that our friends were "At Home."

True to his promise, Barnes at once released the guide, who disappeared into the darkness. Strahan doubled round to see that the men were in their places and that every outlet was blocked.

Barnes, with two sepoys, ran to the front of the hut and, after a short scuffle with their bayonets, the sepoys forced the Chinese sentry back and burst into the hut, followed by Barnes and his interpreters shouting to the raiders to surrender.

By this time Strahan had got to the front of the hut, and he followed them in. The scene was a strange one. Imagine a long, low hut, with a thatch roof, and divided into compartments by bamboo mat walls some six feet high. The raiders had extinguished the lamp as Barnes had entered, so that the only light was that of a flickering fire.

In the doorway were two Gurkha sepoys with fixed

bayonets, Barnes with his left hand on the raider chief's throat and with his right pressing a revolver to the latter's head, while Strahan stood by his side.

A few feet away, directly opposite the little party, was a knot of three Chinamen, also with fixed bayonets—beyond, in the darkened room, were several figures of more armed men.

Shouts filled the air. Barnes and his interpreters ordering the Chinese to surrender—the chieftain, who fully realised his danger between two fires, added his entreaties to their orders; outside, a series of grunts and hoarse shouts from the sepoys made it appear as if an army had risen from the night and surrounded the hut—while, above all, could be heard the yells of another interpreter, who was shouting to the villagers to remain quiet as no harm was intended to them.

It was as if Bedlam itself had been let loose.

"Sahib, abhi goli dala gea hai" ("Sir, they have this minute loaded"), murmured one of the Gurkhas in Strahan's ear.

"Steady men, don't load, remember your orders."

The strain was terrific. There they stood facing imminent death. The Chinese had their fingers on their triggers, anything might make one of them press it, and, at that short range, a bullet would necessarily have found its billet. The party at the doorway must have fallen to a man, and then the Gurkhas would have poured in and converted the place into a shambles, in revenge.

At such a crisis the moments seem hours—every nerve was on the rack—the strain was awful.

"Fire the hut," shouted Strahan, and, as he said so, he turned and lighted a match.

"Crash!" the threat was sufficient—down went the Chinese rifles and surrender was made. A few quick orders and the captured arms were taken outside, the prisoners were collected in one room with double sentries at each door, and then Barnes and Strahan, the tension over, with a lump in their throats, turned to each other and shook hands warmly over their success.

PYEN DUA.

ALADORE.

BY HENRY NEWBOLT.

CHAPTER XXIX.—HOW YWAIN CAME INTO THE LOST LANDS OF THE SOUTH, AND OF THREE SIGNS WHEREBY THAT COUNTRY MIGHT BE KNOWN.

Now Ywain had in his going but one only intent, and that was by reason of his lady's word that he should find her in the South. So he ceased from his running and his shouting, and he looked upon the stars; and under the Herdsman he found the South and made to go thitherward. But he went not by the way of the high road: for he supposed that Vincent and his would raise hue and cry after him. So he left the road and climbed forthright upon the foothills that were hard by the city. And as he had supposed, so he saw it come about upon the road beneath him: for there issued suddenly out of the gateway both lanthorns and torches, like a scattering of sparks out of a chimney. And they which bore them ran hither and thither both up and down the road, bawling and babbling in the worst manner: for their voices were harsh to hear, and out of all tune of bells. And Ywain sat above and beheld them unaware: and all their fury was by reason only that one had forsaken their ordinance.

Then he left them to their hunting, and climbed further above the foothills: and he went all night to the Southward by starlight only. And when the cold of dawn was passed then the sun shone warmly upon him: and a shepherd gave him milk and bread to break fast, and he lay long thereafter in a hollow of the hills. And about him was much blossom of wild flowers, and upon the blossom came a million of bees, some great and some small, and every one of them droning busily upon his bagpipes: and also below that place was a meadow of sheep with many lambs bleating. And Ywain had joy of those beasts and of their droning and their bleating: for whether he slept or wakened the sound of them was in his ears and in his blood.

Then at the dusk he set forth again, and so he went nine nights and days: for always he voyaged by night and slept by day, because of espial. But on the ninth night he came into the lands which Aithne named to him, for she named them the Lost Lands of the South; and when he was come therein he knew them by a sign, and the sign

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whereby he knew them was the third of three.

For when he first came into those lands it was evening, and not long past moonrise: and notwithstanding that all day he had taken joy of the sun and of the noise of beasts and birds, yet now he had no less joy of the coolness and the silence. And he strode forward upon the shoulders of the hills, going swiftly and strongly: for the moon was now waxing fast, and the light of her lightened the green spaces of the grass.

Then as he went his eyes also were lightened, and he saw the world anew. For he perceived how that the beauty of it was of no fading excellence, but only by long time forgotten: and belike remembered again and again forgotten many times, according as men made clean their hearts or darkened them. And he saw that land as a land of Gods and not of men only: and though he saw not the Gods nor heard them, yet he perceived plainly both their radiance and their breathing.

Then in his joy he gave thanks to the Moon, as to the Queen of Heaven: for he knew no longer what he did. And immediately he saw before him an upland all hoar in moonlight: for upon the sides of it there was a semblance as of mist rising. Yet was that semblance no mist, for it moved swiftly without wind: and Ywain looked again and saw it as a company of maidens dancing together. And their attire was all of cloudy silk, and their feet were bright as with ten thousand dew drops: and their hair was whirled about them like wisps of smoke. And it seemed to Ywain that they danced so lightly as no thing living, save music only: for that will dance lightly without sound in the imagination of the heart.

And Ywain knew not the dancers nor how they might be named: but I suppose that they were of the hill maidens, which were of old time called by the name of Oreads. And it is like enough that they which he saw were the same: for their beauty also was of the earth but nowise transitory. And Ywain beheld their dancing gladly and kept no count of time; for as he stood the Moon passed over him and went Southing, and he marked her not. But at the last they danced more quickly, and with the sight of them his blood began to work: and he endured it not long, but he went running towards the upland. And as he ran the maidens whirled them thrice into the air, and so sank down: and Ywain saw them no more, for the earth received them, and the hill lay bare before him.

Then he took his way Southward and looked again upon the moon: and the silver of her beam was faded, and the sable of her shadows, for she was well-nigh drowned in dawn. And when the day was risen he began to go more wearily: for in those lands the sun was nearer and bore hard upon the wayfarers. And

within a fair mile he saw a wood before him: and the wood was full of great ilex-trees, with laurels shining about the margent of it. And he devised to go therein, by reason of the shade and coolness.

But when he was come thither he clean forgot his weariness: and he perceived that the wood was no lonely place but full of magic. For when he looked he saw nothing stirring: but when he looked not then always he perceived a stirring or a flitting or a vanishing on the one side or on the other. And he walked no more freely, but warily, by reason of the eyes and ears that were about him: yet he saw neither eyes nor ears to give him reason.

Then at the last he came again to open ground, and he laid him down upon the edge of it within the shadow of the wood: and he took his rest and thought to be there alone. But within a while he returned into his restlessness: for he heard a sighing as of a little wind that came quickly and went past him and so along the hillside upwards. And in the passing of the wind he saw as it were three damsels running swiftly one after another. And as they ran his eyes were dazed with the beauty of them and his wits stood still and the whole world moved about him. And he got him to his feet and laid his hand upon his eyes: and when he had covered his eyes then he remembered how he had seen those damsels plainly. For they were tall and slender of form and clear brown of colour: and they were arrayed all in green and gold like young boughs in sunlight. Also they ran smoothly as a full river will run towards a weir.

Then he lifted his eyes and looked again: and he saw them and saw them not. For the place was still and no thing moved upon it: but under the sun were three trees there before him. And the trees were by seeming three laurels windy-blown: for they leaned a little forward one after another, and their greenery went all one way, as it were streaming up the hillside. And Ywain supposed that in the dazzle of his eyes he had seen the trees and taken them for damsels: yet he looked long upon them as though perchance they were damsels indeed, and trees by semblance only. So he went forward pondering, and this time also he knew not that it was a sign which he had seen.

Then he began to leave the high hills, and he came into a little downland with downs that tumbled divers ways. And it was a bare land, but warm and rich: and in the valleys were cots with corn about them, and rivers going softly in deep meadows. And as he went he saw before him a beechen grove with seven trees therein: and the grove was lonely and clear of boskage, and it seemed to Ywain that he had sight of children playing between the trees. So he came nearer, going slow and

craftily: and he stood behind the endmost tree and looked through the grove, for it was but little. And that which he saw was passing strange to him: for the children were there before him, and the like of them he saw never in all his days. Naked they were and manlike to the middle,—in their flesh fat and in their countenance all merry babes: but below they were of another fashion, for their hams were wool-begrown and they were goat-kneed and goat-footed. Also their hair upon their heads was woolly and their ears were pointed and a-prick like little horns. And it was plain to see that they were kin to the beasts and of them well understanded: for one child held a squirrel between his hands, and the squirrel feared not, but kept his tail a-high; and one sat piping to a company of small fowls, which also sat and piped to him. But there was yet another child fast by, which vexed the piper with a barley straw: and he ceased not for his brother's frowning, but tickled him evilly amidst his ear.

Then when Ywain saw those babes and their playing his thoughts left him and forgetfulness and joy came upon him very suddenly, and his heart was delivered of a great laughter. And that laughter went rolling forth from him as smoke goes rolling from a fire of green wood, and like smoke it was renewed continually, bursting thickly forth without end. And the children heard it and ceased from their playing: yet it brought no fear upon them, neither upon the beasts that were their fellows. For the squirrel chattered and the small fowls piped more loudly, and the children also wantoned in laughter, and rolled upon the ground together: and when they came upon their feet again they spied Ywain and cried out joyously upon him, and they ran against him with their heads and blethered after the manner of kids. And when Ywain felt the butting of their heads and the busyness of their hands about him then there came before his eyes a haze of brightness, so that he saw the world as it were golden and gleaming, and it seemed to him that he had returned to the morning of his youth.

Then with his much laughter his strength went from him, and for content he sighed and so laid him down upon the ground: and the children sat them beside him and tumbled one with another. And as they sported and tumbled together it bechanced that one of them struck Ywain with his foot: and Ywain started a little, for the kick was notable. And he perceived right well the reason: for he saw again the child's foot, how it was small and hard like the hoof of a goat. And instantly his thought quickened that before had been sleeping: and he knew the land whereto he had come. For this was the third sign, and sign past doubting: howbeit the first two were also

signs and plain enough. But what he perceived not by Oreads and by Dryads, that he learned easily by Fauns: for of those he had but vision of the eyes, but with these there came also kicking of the flesh.

CHAPTER XXX.—HOW YWAIN HAD FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FAUNS.

So Ywain lay there upon the earth, and his laughter ebbed from him: and he set him to gather his wits together as a huntsman gathers his hounds that have been chasing over wide. And in part he gathered them but not all: for it seemed that some part of him was beyond calling and would not return. But of that he left thinking, and was content: and his heart was emptied of all thoughts save three only. For he had great desire of eating and of fellowship and of dancing: and the sun filled him with strength and the air quivered before his eyes, and he leaped up upon his feet.

Then he looked down between the beechen boles and saw where other two fauns came swiftly up the hill, leaping towards him with great leaps: and they were no children but goatmen grown with little beards upon their faces. And he stood still to meet with them, for he knew not what their dealing might be: but they came joyously to him and favoured him with their hands and with their looks and with their voices. And when they had greeted him they began to lead him away into the valley: and Ywain went with them gladly and the children followed after, lagging and sporting one with another.

And as they went Ywain beheld the grown fauns curiously: and he saw how one was by seeming older and one younger, as it might be two youths of eighteen year and twenty. Yet their faces were not two but one, for they were made after one and the same pattern: and they differed in no wise save in the hair of their beards. For of one the beard was soft and like the down within the rose-hips, and of the other it was hard and like the beards of barley. But in their lips and in their eyes was nothing diverse, and Ywain saw them as a man may see one only face in two several mirrors: also their voices chanted together tuneably, like voices of young sheep in a flock.

And they shewed Ywain how they were called: for they pointed each at other and so named their names, and the older one was called Panikos and the younger one was called Paniskos. Then Ywain spoke their names and laughed and he shewed them his own name also: and he laughed again, for they used it strangely, bleating somewhat in their speech. Then in the like manner they shewed him other words,

and he learned of them easily: for they spoke of no far matters but only of such as were according with his appetite. And in especial they spoke of eating and of drinking and of music: and also, as he supposed, of hunting and of sleeping. And though Ywain knew not yet what they would say concerning these things, yet he knew certainly that they spoke thereof. And he perceived their joy, and had fellowship with them: for he saw how they lived far off from carefulness and perplexity, and how their life was mingled continually with the beauty of the earth.

CHAPTER XXXI.—HOW YWAIN MET WITH A SHEPHERDESS AND HEARD A MUSIC, AND HOW HE HAD SIGHT OF ALADORE THE FIRST TIME.

Thus began Ywain to be consorted with fauns, and to live after their manner: and he slept with them that night in a little wildwood fast by a river. And before they slept they gave him to eat of such things as they had: and truly his supper was no feast. For the fauns live all by nuts and by grains, and have no bread: also they will taste flesh but they know not the use of fire. So on the morrow early they caught a good fish and tore it: and when they perceived that Ywain loved not raw meat, then they had pity on him. And they left the river and brought him to a shepherd's hut, and they made him understand that he should go nearer and knock upon the door. For they knew that where there were men, there belike would be men's meat, whether of bread or of flesh.

So Ywain came to the hut, and knocked upon the door: but he heard no voice within. And when he would have knocked again a second time he dared not: for he knew that there stood one within and listened silently. Then he devised to speak instead of to knock: and he spoke the greeting of a pilgrim, humbly. And while he was yet speaking the door was opened, and there was there a young shepherdess standing upon the threshold. And when he saw her his heart began to beat furiously: and the beating of it upon his ribs was like the galloping of a horse upon a green road. For the shepherdess stood looking at him out of youth and fearfulness: but the face was the face of his lady and of no woman else.

Then his voice changed, and he spoke again to her trembling: but she nodded with her head and answered not. And she put forth her hand to bring him in, and he perceived that it was brown and hard, and he looked again and saw how her face also was brown as with the burning of one summer upon another. Then he said within himself: My lady was never so: yet

if this be not her body it is her soul, and in all her shapes I am to serve and follow her.

Then the shepherdess gave him to eat: and that which she gave him was no rich man's portion. But without doubt she changed it in the giving: for the bread was fine bread between his teeth, and the flesh was as the flesh of swans and peacocks. And while he ate she looked upon him, and he also looked upon her: and he ate but little by reason of his looking and his delight. And when she perceived this she forsook him suddenly and went out: and immediately his hunger increased upon him and he dealt shortly with all that she had given him. Then she came again suddenly, and looked upon the bare board, and laughed: but in all this time she spoke not one word, so that Ywain marvelled and was some deal discomfited.

Then he called her by her name, Aithne: but thereto she shook her head and continued saying no word. And he said to her: What do you in this place, and by what name shall I call you? And again she answered not, but she took two shepherd's crooks that stood behind the door of the hut, and one of them she kept and one she gave into his hand, and so led him forth. And they came together to the sheepstead and untied the wattled cotes, and loosed the sheep: and together they went hillward in the cool of the morning.

Now as they went together Ywain looked about him, and he saw the fauns that were his friends: and they stood beside the valley road in a place whereto Ywain should come presently. And he called to them joyfully, and they heard him calling: so that he hoped they would have stayed for him. But when he was now within a pitch of them, he saw how they were suddenly gone away: for they ran swiftly from him towards their wildwood, and the reeds of the river hid them as they ran. Yet they went not with one mind or one fear: for one of them stayed in his running and returned. And Ywain had sight of him among the willows, peering with bright eyes: and he perceived that he was stealing fast upon them, and going from tree to tree. And when they were at the turning of the road, where they must leave the valley and go upon the hill, then the reeds rustled and crackled beside the road: and the faun broke forth suddenly upon them, and he was that one that was the younger of the two. And he looked no more upon Ywain but upon the shepherdess only: and he stooped down and took her hand and nosed in it lovingly as a deer will nose in the hand of her that feeds him. And Ywain spoke to him by his name: but thereat he started up and went leaping after his fellow, and rustling like a wind among the reeds.

Then the shepherdess led Ywain forth upon the hill, and behind them was the river and before them was the little beechen grove. And they came

to the grove and sat within the shade of it and looked over the valley: and the sheep went cropping the wild thyme and the milkwort, and clanking pleasantly with their bells. And the shepherdess looked downward upon Ywain, for he lay before her at her feet: and he turned and looked upward into her eyes. And as he looked the day went over him in a moment of time, between two beats of his heart: and he lacked speech of her no longer, for he dreamed under her silence as a man may dream under a starry night.

Then she arose and led him again downward: and the sheep went down before them to the river, and fell to drinking greedily. And as they drank the wind of evening came softly down the stream, and upon it came a sound of piping: and Ywain's heart ached to hear that piping, for it was of a sad and piercing sweetness. Then his feet began to move beneath him, and he left the sheep to their drinking and went toward the music. And he came to a glassy pool among the rocks: and upon the rocks was the young faun sitting, and playing on his pipes, and under his feet was the evening sky, shown clearly upon the water of the pool.

And Ywain came anear, for the music drew him strongly: and he stood and looked upon the pool, and he saw the sky therein. And he saw it not as sky but as a great region of the sea: for the clouds upon it were like lands of earth, and they lay there after the fashion of bays and heads and islands. And there was a coast that lay fast by him, as it were beneath his very feet: and it ran to the right of him and to the left, and beyond it was the void space of the sea. And as he looked upon the coast he knew it well: for he stood by seeming upon the High Steep of Paladore and looked out over the Shepherdine Sands.

Then with the beauty of the place he fell to longing, and because of the music that he heard his heart was restless: and he desired greatly to be seeking for the land wherefrom that music came. And in a moment it was there before him, beyond the void space of the sea. And the form of it was as the form of Paladore, with the city and the steep all fashioned out of cloud: but it lay lonely and far out, like an island of the West. And a light was upon it more delectable than all the lights of sunset, so that it seemed to burn also in the eyes of him that saw it: and the light and the music increased together, and together they faded and ceased. And when they ceased Ywain turned him aside to weep, for he perceived that he was homeless.

But as he turned he saw his lady beside him standing, and she spoke and called him by his name as one that knew him afresh and was no more bedumbed. And he cast himself into her arms and kissed her: for he knew that he had had sight of no earthly city but of

Aladore. Then he looked again upon the pool, if by fortune he might see that city again: and he saw but a ripple on the water, for with his hoof the faun had dabbled it.

CHAPTER XXXII.—HOW YWAIN LIVED AS IT HAD BEEN IN THE GOLDEN AGE AND HOW HE WAS STILL UNSATISFIED.

Right so came the night and they got them homeward. And Aithne went to her hut, where she had her living among the shepherds, but Ywain returned and rested with the fauns. And he slept not, but lay a great time waking, and longing for the morrow morn: whereby he hastened it not, but delayed it rather. And this is the folly of men that they will look ever forward to that which they have not, and take no rest in that which they have. For Ywain had that day gathered to fill both his hands—namely, by seeing Aladore and by taking of his lady in arms: and in a long life there will come but few such days, so that it were wisdom to cherish them in memory. But Ywain remembered scantly that which was past and gathered, for his mind was all on the kisses that were to come: and folly it was past gainsaying, but of such folly is the life of man.

So he lay longing, and arose in hope, and continued many days after the same gait. And his desire fled still before him, and he followed and thought not on the way of his going: for to him one day was like another, and one night was like another, and he counted them no more than a child will count the beads upon a string. But Aithne counted them and laid them by, and when she counted them she trembled. For she also would have him gone on pilgrimage, seeing that so only might she meet with her love in Aladore: but many times she said within herself: Not yet, poor lady me, for none knows what may fortune, and belike this is all that shall be mine.

Now the manner of their days was after the manner of the Golden Days. For their meeting was in the freshness of the morning, when all things are made new: and they ate and drank together with few words, and between them was a bowl of milk, and over it they laughed one at another with their eyes. For about the bowl was a thread of scarlet wool, and Ywain knew well for what reason it was there: yet would he ask many times for asking's sake. And Aithne said how it was there of great necessity: for she set it there to be a witchknot, to draw her love to her by shepherd's magic. Then many times he broke the thread and cast it on the ground, and always when he came again the knot was freshly knotted upon the bowl. So out of nothing they made much, after the old fashion.

Then with their sheep they took the road, and came thence upon the upland pastures.

And while the day was yet cool they two went wandering alone, and marvelling at all the diverse flowers upon the hills. But when the sun was overhead and the air began to tremble upon the rocks, then beneath a little cliff they found a spring of water flowing out continually and sparkling like crystal above the pebbles. And thereby grew tall fir-trees, and white poplars, and cypresses and planes, and on the branches the cicalas were chirruping, all sunburnt, and the ring-doves were moaning one to another of love. And below them were many flowers of fragrance, such as fill the meadows in the heyday of the year before it wanes: and all the land smelt sweetly of summer, and the wild bees went booming about the water springs.

And thither came Ywain to his shepherding, and he forgot the world as though it had never been. For he remembered neither land nor gold, nor his old fame among men: but he sat with his love beneath a rock and held her in his arms, and they murmured one to another, and watched their sheep feeding among the thyme. And when it drew towards evening then they came downward from the hill, and listened to hear the young faun's music: for among the fauns there is not one that dare pipe at noon, but at evening they will pipe without fear. And when there was a sound of music then Ywain came always to the glassy pool, hoping that he might have sight of Aladore. And when the pool was still he saw it, for the piping of the faun was of a strong magic, beyond all understanding of him that made it, as happens many times to them that make music. But Ywain had of that magic more pain than joy: for the vision which he saw thereby was of no substantial city, but an image made in water. And to find that city in truth his heart was restless with desire, for he knew that except he came there he might have neither fulness of love, neither abiding.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—OF THE MADNESS OF THE FAUNS, AND HOW YWAIN FORSOOK THEM SUDDENLY, AND HIS LADY WITH HIM.

Moreover when midsummer was now come Ywain began to misdoubt him of the fauns: for from gentle they were become fierce, and when he saw their eyes he saw them changed, as a sky that is hot with thunder. Also they departed from him continually, both by night and by day, and he saw how they went wandering alone and secretly: and when they went forth they went as it were ravening like beasts, and when they came again they came weary and shamed before him, as with the shame of men, for in their nature they were divided between two kinds.

Then upon a night it fortuned to Ywain that his sleep was broken, because of the moonlight that crept upon him. And at the last he awoke utterly, and in the moonlight he saw the young faun beside him sleeping, but the old one he saw not, for he was plainly slunk away. And Ywain took but little heed of him, as at this time, for his own head was weary and he had yet no comfort of the night. So he turned him and lay still again and thought to sleep.

But as he lay there came a sound from far off, like the cry of one that shrieks suddenly in fear. And with that sound Ywain also was affrighted, and his heart stood still, and he held his breath to listen. And there was silence for a space, and he said: It is an evil dream, for it is long since that cry was in my ears. And therewith the cry came again, louder than before, and Ywain perceived that the voice was the voice of a woman: and he started up and leaned upon his hand, and the sweat pricked him suddenly among the roots of his hair. And the young faun also started up out of sleep and stood before Ywain listening: and Ywain saw his eyes that glittered under the moon, and his mouth that grinned and trembled, as a dog's mouth grins before he bites.

Then the crying came again the third time, and continued more and more, and it was by seeming nearer, as of one running and crying upon the hillside; and Ywain thought to know the place, and he leapt upon his feet to go thither. But when he would have gone he could not, for the young faun cast his arms about Ywain's knees and held him fast. And Ywain looked down upon him and was astonished, for aforetime he had seen him as a thing young and tameable, and of a nature softer than the nature of men. But now he saw the teeth of him and heard the growling: and therewith a red hatred came upon Ywain, and his heart swelled up to bursting, and he fell upon the faun and beat him with fists upon the head. But the faun loosed him not for all that, nor ceased not from his mirth, and they two rolled upon the ground and fought together, the one grinning always and the other sobbing, for Ywain wept fiercely with rage to be so hindered.

Then at the last he caught the faun and choked him, and so cast him grovelling: and he escaped out of the wild wood and began to climb upon the hill. And now that he was escaped he knew no longer whither he should go, for there was no more sound of shrieking, but a great silence of moonlight and solitude. And he went to and fro upon the hillside and found there no living thing: and at the last the sky began to lighten towards dawn, and his strength left him, so that he laid him down and slept he knew not where.

And when he awoke the sun was high, and he looked adown the hill and saw Aithne coming towards him, and she was leading forth her sheep, for it was time. And as she came he saw her loveliness while she was yet far from him, for her going was both proud and womanly, and she showed forth in it the fashion of her heart. And when he saw that he thought on pain and terror, and he had great pity upon all women, and he went quickly to meet her and said: What have we here to do, for we should be gone long since. But she looked at him and saw how he was already weary, even in the first hour of the day, and how he was troubled beyond measure, even in her presence that loved him: also she saw how he was soiled and somewhat be-bled upon the hands. And she touched his hand with her hand and asked him of his hurt, and for what cause he would be gone. And he told her no truth, for he would not tell her of his pity, but he spoke of himself only, and he said: I am afraid, for I go in peril of my life, by reason of the fauns. Then she said: Dear heart, be not afraid, for I know the fauns, that they will be cruel at their hours, and I have a spell to tame them, for they are but beasts. Yea, said he, they are my brethren of the half blood. And now I beseech you that you lay down your crook and leave your sheep to feed as may befall them, and let us begone by what way you will. And she delayed and asked him Whither? And he said: I know not whither, but this I know, that I have fought with my kin, and I have dwelt among them long enough.

Then Aithne sighed, and she turned her about and looked upon the valley, and the sun lay broad upon it, and the morning shadows, and the river ran bright among the willows below and in the rocky pools above. And she sighed again, and then she said: It is nothing, beloved, for we have been long together, and we have that which hath been and that which shall be. But as men say, a joy that ends is never long enough, so now I sigh because I must bid this place farewell. And I knew always that we must some day be gone from it: and I waited only for your will. This is my will, said Ywain: and he cast her crook upon the ground, to be a token to them that should find it lying. Then he took her by the hand, and they looked again upon the valley: and they kissed for comfort and for memory, and turned them and went together across the hills.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—HOW YWAIN AND AITHNE WENT FLYING BETWEEN SUN AND MOON.

Then they went hastily until it was past noon, and Ywain would not that they should stint, till at last they wearied both, and lacked strength for lack of meat. And they espied

a shepherd's hut all lonely among the hills, and it stood fast by a thicket, and they knew not whose it might be, for it was far off from the valley of their dwelling. So they came thither and found it empty, for the shepherds were abroad with their flock. Then they went within the hut and shut to the door and thought to rest them awhile. But Ywain sat him down beside the window and hid himself, that he might keep watch, for he doubted that they were not yet wholly escaped.

And when he had watched for the space of half an hour he saw how that there was something stirring in the border of the thicket: and presently came forth the young faun, going warily upon his hands and upon his shanks. And he cast about him on this side and on that, nosing the earth as a hound upon the trail: and he began to creep toward the hut, and Ywain moved not but laid hold upon his staff. But in the same moment he looked beyond the faun and saw two shepherds which came coasting the thicket, and he heard their dogs behind them barking and driving in the sheep. And the faun also heard them and was discomfited: for his wits had been all upon the trail and he was well-nigh trapped. And the shepherds saw him and cried out upon him and made to beat him with their crooks, but he ran with great leaps, and passed before them and was gone into the thicket.

Then Ywain went out to meet the shepherds, and to question them, for he perceived that they were come home from pasture before their time. And they said that they had great need to come, for that there was a gathering of fauns throughout all the country, and it was the time of their madness wherein they would be fell and beastly.

Then Ywain told his tale also, and they counselled him earnestly to go further, for they understood how that he was hated of the fauns, and belike against him was their gathering, and against none other. So Ywain brought his lady forth in spite of weariness, and the shepherds gave them such meat as they had, and sent them away.

Then Ywain began to be afeared as he had never been afeared in all his days, for he saw how his lady was fallen lame with the roughness of the hills: and this that was before him was no proper warfare, wherein a man may die reasonably, but a desperate and unclean fortune, to be overtaken by beasts in darkness. And on every wind he heard voices, and behind every tree he saw the shadow of his enemies, so that he went continually as through an ambush, forlorn of hope. But Aithne spoke always with good cheer, and made light of fauns, as one that had a spell to subdue all creatures at her will. And almost Ywain believed her, for she was stedfast beyond all bravery of feigning.

Then at the last the sun began to fall more swiftly to his setting, and a great perplexity came upon Ywain. For he supposed that in the darkness would be the end of all, but he knew not how nor in what point of time: and he had a longing to say somewhat to Aithne, yet for shame he could not say it, lest by chance after despair there should come deliverance. And therein his heart betrayed him not, for his fortune was better than his fear.

Thus they continued going forward, and speaking as in hope: and though they spoke deceivingly each to other, yet their spirits were in peace together. And as they went they looked upon the sky westward: and there was a little span between the sun and the sky border, and by that span they saw their life and measured it. And the sky was clear above and without cloud, but the sun was greatening below in a mist of rose: and against the mist was a black jot, as it were a black crow homing towards nightfall. And when it came nearer they saw how it was in bigness greater than a crow and in colour diverse: for the light went through it and yellowed it, and it flew more swiftly than a bird. Also it came with a sound of humming, like a great bee, and the nearer the louder, till the air was shaken with the humming of it, and the blood quickened in them that heard it. And Ywain and Aithne stood still to look upon it, and they saw that it was by seeming a man which flew with wings: and he came over them where they stood and went about them in a circle like a buzzard, wheeling lightly and looking down upon them.

Then Ywain made a sign requiring succour of him: and he took Aithne into his arms and made to shelter her, and with his staff he swung great strokes about him, as it were against a host of enemies. And his sign was well understanded of him that was flying, for he dropped swiftly down upon the earth, and he put off his wings and came running where Ywain was and Aithne. And they saw how that he was a man like unto themselves, but tall and strong and comely out of measure, and at a word he perceived their peril and the evil malice of the fauns. Then hastily he did on his wings, and he took a thong, and when he had bound Ywain and Aithne with the thong he made them fast beneath his pinions, and so mounted lightly upon the air.

And Ywain and Aithne looked down and marvelled and held their breath, for the whole earth fell from them suddenly. And for a moment they had sight of fauns, running together like ants beneath them: and then they saw the fauns also fall from them and become as dust. And the sun set, and the moon rose, and they went flying swiftly between the sun and the moon.

CHAPTER XXXV.—OF THE CITY OF DŒDALA, AND HOW AN OLD DAME THEREIN DESPAIRED OF IT.

So they went swiftly and spoke no word, being astonished unto dumbness: for their life was changed suddenly and they were in no place of the world. But he that bore them held his course, and he flew Eastward by the space of an hour. Then they were aware how he sloped downwards in his flight, and they looked and saw beneath them a great city on the border of the sea, and in no long time they came lightly down and took land before a gate that was there. Then they three entered afoot into the city, and they came quickly to a good house and were received therein.

Now the house was the house of an old and noble dame, by name Eirene, and she was the mother of Hyperenor, which had borne Ywain and Aithne upon his wings. And them she greeted courteously, and received them to be her guests while it should please them: but to her son she spoke after another sort. For in one and the same breath she dealt him sweet words and bitter, giving thanks to all the gods for his home coming, and also bidding him begone where she might never be troubled with him more. And after this manner she continued all supper-time, and she would have Aithne to know how she was the most miserable of all women living.

For I was born, she said, in a city far off from this, in a land of other men and other customs, and I came hither blindfold in my youth. And the veil wherewith I was blinded was the veil of marriage, as it fortunes to the most of us. For of this city I knew nothing, but I supposed it to be an ancient city and a pious, with gods and customs like our own: and I found it given over to a madness of inheritance, and by special wrath of heaven accursed and punished. For this is the city of Dœdala, where is the tomb of Dœdalus, whom they call the father of inventions: and though his bones be perished, yet they keep here his impiety, and do after it. And their madness is beyond belief, for there is nothing that they will do by way of nature if by any means they can devise to do it otherwise, as by mechanemes of iron or brass. And at my first coming they were assotted upon chariots of fire, and afterwards upon a hundred other devices, full of noise and dangerous exceedingly: and now they sin with the very sin of Dœdalus. For when he had found out many inventions, he found out this also, to fly above the earth with wings: a thing plainly hateful to the gods, for if it had been their will, they would have made men like to birds in the beginning. But their will was not so, and they have sent upon this city the curse of Dœdalus: for as the god took his son from him and cast him

dead upon the sea, so now it is with us, and heavier a hundredfold.

Then the old dame wept bitterly, that it was pity to see, and her son ran to her and knelt beside her and handled her lovingly. And when he had some deal comforted her, then he spoke merrily and said how it was shame to lay so much on gods and to make them unreasonable and so bring them into judgment. And it may be, he said, that it is we, and none other, that are the gods, for certainly we are greater than our fathers, and there shall yet be greater that shall come after us. But his mother rebuked him and said: I will not hear such words; for your fathers kept due observance and lived long, and you of this generation do reverence to none, but you fly outrageously in the face of heaven, and your youth is cast down upon the earth as upon a dust-heap. And to what profit? for you die like the flowers and leave no name behind you. And Hyperenor said: So be it, but our fruit shall follow us: for it may be that our sons shall fly and not fall. But Eirene wept again and said: You are great givers, for you tear your mothers' hearts to feed your children.

Then Aithne went to her to comfort her, for she was sorry in her heart for that old dame, and she saw how she had no other son but this one only, and him she looked daily to lose. And Ywain also had pity on her, for there is no man that can bear to look upon a woman weeping. But he was divided in mind, and in part he was pitiful, as need was, but in greater part he took side with Hyperenor and upheld him to have the right of it. For he saw how the young man was a great knight and strong and passing comely: and though his words were some deal big, yet his voice was slow and courteous, as the voice of one that would make good. Also in his doctrine Ywain upheld him: for in all wars there will be some that die, and they die gladly to subdue a kingdom, though for themselves they see it not nor enter into it. But most he loved him as one that would dare and do, and of his daring and his doing he would willingly hear more: for it seemed to him a great and marvellous thing that men should fly, that so they might come into all places of the earth, yea, and perchance into some that are beyond.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—OF A PROMISE THAT WAS MADE TO YWAIN, AND HOW HE TOOK WINGS TO SEEK FOR ALADORE.

Then after supper the old dame went out, and Aithne with her, and Ywain was left there with Hyperenor, and they two sat a long time talking together. And as they

talked they drank their wine, by cup and by cup: and they sat beside a window, and the window was open wide, looking upon the city and upon the lights thereof, and the night over them was blue and spangled with bright stars. And Ywain perceived how that Hyperenor was no longer strange to him, but near and kind as out of old friendship: and he spoke with him concerning many matters, and was accorded with him continually. Then at the last he spoke of Aladore, and he told him how that he must of necessity come there to be wedded with his lady, and how he had sight of that land as it were of a cloud in heaven, yet he could by no manner of means attain to find it.

And Hyperenor received his saying readily, and began to make him large promises: for he was such an one that in his book was no word for things impossible. And he said how he would give Ywain wings, and learn him quickly how he should use them, so that in one day he might well come to fly with all ease, if he had but good courage and continuance of fortune. And as for Aladore, he had no knowledge thereof, but to find it he took to be no hard matter. For if such place there be, he said, be sure that flying will bring us to it, save it be at the sea bottom: and in that case, he told Ywain how that he had yet another mechaneme to do his purpose, so that by wing or by water Ywain should certainly come thither.

Then when Ywain heard those words he was fain to believe them, and he began to feel his wings uplifting him. And he doubted not of Hyperenor, but he thought to know more of his mind concerning Aladore: therefore he asked him toward what quarter of the earth they should begin their seeking. And Hyperenor answered Toward no quarter: for that the land was plainly no place of earth, but a floating isle, after the kind of the isles which float upon the sea, and belike it would be found in the region of the stars. And Ywain marvelled at his knowledge and took comfort of it: for he also believed that it was no earthly city which he sought, but what else it might be he knew not, until it was showed him reasonably.

So he heard Hyperenor and was content, and looked upward to the stars: and he beheld their aspect such as with his eyes he never yet beheld it. For he knew them of old both by stars and by constellations, but now first he saw their images in heaven: and behind every constellation was an image, like a great shadow decked with stars, and the shadows went about the high dome like servants of the gods, going silently in their appointed order. And Ywain knew no longer where he might be, for he saw no more the lights of the city nor heard the voice of Hyperenor that talked beside him;

also it seemed to him that time was fallen dead, so that the world was void and still, as a glass is void when all the sands are run down upon the heap. And he awoke as from long dreaming: but he perceived that Hyperenor knew not how he had been from him all that space. So within a while they betook them to their rest.

Then on the morrow they rose up early, and came to a meadow ground which lay before the gate of the city: and Hyperenor gave Ywain wings according to his promise, and shewed him all his own skill therewith. And Ywain received his teaching quickly, and brought it to good market, so that in no long time he went which way he would: and he wearied not nor failed of strength, but his wings upbore him lightly without labour, for they were so devised.

And when it was evening he thought to prove his adventure: for he was not willing to return into the house to Aithne until he should have somewhat to tell her. And when the sun was now going down into the sea Ywain did on his wings again and scanned all the regions of the sky: and there was no cloud near the sun, but over against his setting there was one only cloud, made golden by the light of evening. And under the cloud was the moon rising, and she came up out of the mountains of the East and went climbing towards the cloud. Then Ywain called to Hyperenor and together they leapt into the air.

Then at the first they went wheeling about and about, to gain the height of the sky, and the dusk began to fall softly round them. And Ywain looked down in his wheeling, and there was the city of Dœdala very far beneath him, and it smallened and darkened continually, so that save for the moonlight upon the towers he had soon seen it no more. But for a time he saw it still lying cold and white by the border of the sea. Then he looked up and saw the stars, and above him Hyperenor flying beneath the starry roof: and Ywain followed him and they left their wheeling and flew straight toward the cloud above the moon. And the moon rose up to meet them, and the light of her came cold upon their faces, and they strained in their flight to hold their way above her, so that they flew faster and faster into the hollow of the night.

And as they went the coldness of the void entered into Ywain's blood, and he felt no more neither hope nor fellowship, and his love lay frozen within him as the root of a flower lies frozen in winter. But his thought was busier than aforetime, and his desire was to know all things which might be known. And he looked down again toward the earth, and saw it as a thing without life or meaning: for in bigness it was lesser than his hand, and it fell beneath him like a stone that is hurtled

from a cliff. And he said within himself: What is that to me, for it is but one amongst many: and he looked up again to Hyperenor that he might follow him further.

But when he looked he saw him not nor the cloud neither, and in a moment his thought was dazed within him, and went staggering like a man struck suddenly upon his eyes. For on every side the stars were changed about him, and they kept no more the order of their constellations, but they were as a crowd rushing upon him, countless and disorderly. Then he looked again upon the moon, and saw her as it were hard by him, and he was yet more in dread: for she was no living land but a bare plain and cold, and upon the plain were hills like naked bones, and black pits like the pits of dead men's eyes. And in the same instant he saw against the moonlight Hyperenor, falling like a dead bird towards the earth. And in his fall he came by Ywain and went fluttering past him, and Ywain leaned over and peered after him, and the coldness left him, and the blood came again swiftly from his heart. And he stooped his head and went whirling down the gulf, and the winds rushed up to meet him and bore him whither they would; for his strength was as the strength of a leaf, that falls at end of summer.

(To be continued.)

A TUDOR ARMY.

I. OFFENSIVE.

No period of English history has been more diversely interpreted by historians of opposing schools than has the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII. These differences of view have arisen from widely varying estimates of the true character of the King, and from differing moral codes by which that character has been judged. Hence we find one great historian of the nineteenth century depicting Henry as a faultless knight, almost godlike in his attributes, while another of equal eminence can see in him nothing but a monster of iniquitous tyranny. Some more recent writers have been content to let the facts speak for themselves and to avoid the expression of extreme opinions. Yet within the last ten years an investigator of the King's matrimonial relations has come to the conclusion that he was nothing more than "a flabby coward," at the mercy of any who could work upon his fears.

The judgments of posterity being thus conflicting, it is pertinent to ask: What did his own people think of Henry VIII.? Their loyalty and confidence in him were severely tested during his later years, when he was pursuing a perilous foreign policy and when the confusion attending his religious reforms had not yet had time to subside. The real public opinion of the country is not to be safely gauged from the utterances of embittered partisans, but may be to some extent deduced from the measures of the Government and the reception they met with. In particular, a consideration of the documents relating to the wars of 1544-5 will be found to throw much light upon the social condition of the country after half a century of Tudor rule.

At the opening of 1544 the whole of Christendom resounded with the clash of arms. Three distinct questions of the day were awaiting the decision of the sword: whether the Turk should continue his victorious advance into the heart of central Europe; whether Charles V. or Francis I. should obtain judgment in the many territorial disputes affecting nearly every side of their vast frontiers; and whether Henry VIII. should be successful in his policy of absorbing Scotland and making himself monarch of all the British Isles. The eastern question had only a distant relation to English affairs, but the other two problems had for the time being coalesced. In 1543 a treaty had been signed by Henry and the Emperor for a joint war upon France and Scotland. The old alliance between the latter powers was

so well understood to be a matter of course as scarcely to need formal reaffirmation. Thus the English King found himself pledged to invade France in person in the summer of 1544 at the head of 42,000 men, in conjunction with a similar force under Charles V. Before doing so, he determined to strike a sudden and crushing blow at Scotland, so that there might be no fear of invasion from the rear in his absence.

Accordingly, in the spring of the year measures were concerted for the invasion in force of south-eastern Scotland. The Duke of Suffolk, brother-in-law of the King, was replaced as Lieutenant of the North by the Earl of Hertford, and it was arranged that at the earliest possible moment the latter should ship his troops on board a fleet conducted by Viscount Lisle, the Lord Admiral of England, sail up the coast to the neighbourhood of Leith, and there disembark and march upon Edinburgh.

For military purposes the northern counties of England, as far south as to include Cheshire, Derby, and Nottingham, were regarded as distinct from the remainder of the country. Their duty was to provide for defence against Scotland, and they were not called upon in case of a campaign against France. Their commander-in-chief was the Lieutenant of the North, his three principal subordinates being the Wardens of the East, Middle, and West Marches. During the fifth decade of the sixteenth century the Borders were in a state of perpetual warfare. The captains of the fortresses on either side organised raids into the enemy's country, dashing across at the head of a few score of mounted men, burning some village or fortified house which they had marked as their prey, and returning with their plunder in a few hours, usually before a force could be sent to intercept them. Larger excursions, by hundreds instead of scores of men, were known as Warden's raids, and were also by no means infrequent. In essence they were the same as the minor ones, although their quarry might be a fair-sized town, or a half-dozen of the strong towers which dotted the countryside. Occasionally the smouldering war blazed up into a serious invasion conducted by the Lieutenant, such as the one presently to be described. Raids, as distinguished from invasions, were carried out by the permanent Border garrisons assisted by the inhabitants of the marches, all of whom between the ages of sixteen and sixty were bound to muster when called upon, and were exempt from taxation in return. All went mounted, spearmen, archers, and hackbuteers, for destruction and not fighting was the object, and speed and secrecy were essential to success. Those expeditions which ended in disaster were usually intercepted and ambushed on their return journey when laden with plunder. On such occasions the

Border horse, unsurpassed for individual hardihood, frequently showed themselves susceptible to sudden and shameful panics.

In normal times the permanent Border garrisons on the English side numbered about 1000 men, increased to 3000 during serious war. For the former number the cost of upkeep was from £1500 to £2000 per month. These, with the scanty garrisons of the coast defences of the south and a staff of gunners at the Tower, were the only regular troops in the King's pay. For the raising of a field army the Tudor Government relied upon the common-law obligation of every man to assist with purse or person in the defence of his country; and the fact that Henry VIII. on several occasions exacted fulfilment of this duty with entire success goes far to dispose of the theory that he was a hated tyrant. None but a King in entire sympathy with his people would have dared to arm them in their thousands while he himself had a mere handful of hired troops wherewith to control them.

On taking up his Lieutenancy, Hertford at once put in hand preparations for the enterprise against Scotland. During March and April the men of the North steadily poured in to the musters at Newcastle and the neighbouring ports. The counties contributed as follows: Northumberland, 1000 horse; Durham, 60 horse and 2000 foot; Cumberland, 1000 horse, 300 foot; Westmoreland, 40 horse, 500 foot; Yorkshire, 400 horse, 7000 foot; Lancashire, 3000 foot; Nottingham, 400 foot; Cheshire, 600 foot; Derby, 300 foot. Totals, 2500 horse and 14,100 foot. Of these, 12,000 foot, together with 3000 mariners, were to form the main invasion by sea, while the horse and the remaining foot were to hold the Borders until news should come that the landing was accomplished, when the horse were to ride rapidly through to Edinburgh and join Hertford under its walls.[1]

Detailed plans were carefully worked out beforehand, on the basis of the whole expedition occupying six weeks from mustering to disbandment.[2] It was estimated that 7500 tons of shipping would be needed, carrying 2 men per ton with a month's victuals. In addition, 3750 tons were allowed for extra victuals, amounting in all to two months' supply, and 500 tons for field artillery and teams. All this shipping was requisitioned in the East coast ports, some of the vessels being foreigners summarily embargoed for the purpose. They were paid for at the rate of 3d. per ton per week. The victuals consisted of

[1] Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII., vol. xix., Pt. I., No. 140.

[2] As events turned out, there was a delay of nearly a month after the troops were ready, owing to contrary winds preventing the shipping from concentrating. This was partially atoned for by the rapidity of operations when once a start had been made.

biscuit, beer, flesh (4 days a week), fish (3 days a week), and cheese. While at sea the men were paid at the rate of 5s. per month, with 8s. worth of victuals free; on land a private soldier received 15s. a month, but found his own food, living on the enemy whenever he could, and having the cost of such King's provisions as he consumed stopped from his wages at a price usually in excess of the market value. The total estimated cost of the invasion, including reserve victuals and the Border forces, amounted to £26,700.[1]

It is not part of the purpose of this paper to describe in detail the doings of the armies in the field, but a brief summary of the events in Scotland may be permitted. On May 1, the fleet with the army on board left the Tyne ports, in which it had been long windbound, the sixty-eight ships getting out in two tides, and two days later arrived in the Firth of Forth. Hertford was an admirable organiser, and, on the following day, with the assistance of the no less capable Admiral, landed his 12,000 soldiers in three hours with their field guns. The landing was effected two miles west of Leith, and was unopposed. The advance on Leith was made in the traditional three "battles," vanguard, main battle, and rearguard. The Scots were taken absolutely by surprise, Cardinal Beaton and the Governor Arran having apparently no inkling of what was intended. Leith was thus taken after scarcely any resistance, and was promptly given over to plunder. It is said that £10,000 worth of booty was acquired by the soldiers. Leaving 1500 men to hold the port, the main body pushed on to Edinburgh. The town was entered after a sharp fight at the Canongate, and was given to the flames after an attempt to bombard the Castle had been beaten off with loss. At this point the army was joined by the 4000 Border horse, who had ridden over under the Wardens of the East and Middle Marches. Finding Edinburgh Castle impregnable, Hertford marched back to Leith, shipped his heavy guns, burned the pier and every house in the town, and set out to march with fire and sword to Berwick, arriving there on May 18th. In the meantime the fleet swept the Forth clear of shipping, carrying off two Scottish warships named the *Lion* and the *Salamander*, and burning everything of minor value. Hertford was disbanding his forces at Berwick within twenty days of his first putting to sea. He had lost but forty men.[2]

The northern expedition,

[1] Letters and Papers, xix., Pt. I., No. 140.

[2] This expedition is fully described in a contemporary pamphlet entitled "The late Expedition in Scotland . . . under the conduit of the right honourable the Earl of Hertford, the year of our Lord God 1544." It is reprinted in Prof. A. F. Pollard's 'Tudor Tracts.

although in its way a triumph of organisation and swift generalship, was but a magnified Border raid, leading to no permanent result. In size and scope it was mere child's play as compared with the effort which Henry now called upon his people to make against France.

Throughout the month of April, while Hertford had been straining at the leash, waiting for the northerly winds to change and set him free to dash at the shores of the Firth, active preparations had been on foot in the midland and southern shires for the raising of a much larger force, with which to fulfil the King's obligations to the Emperor. First, lists were drawn up of the number of men to be levied in each county and the names of the gentry whose estates were to provide them. These returns were combined in a large manuscript book showing in detail "The soldiers to be furnished by the gentlemen of England from the King's Council downwards."[1] The contingents furnished by the Council, the bishops, and the temporal peers come first, followed by those from the counties of England and Wales. The nine northern counties which had raised the army sent against Scotland are not included; and the only forces drawn from Ireland were 2000 kernes, some of whom were sent to strengthen the Border garrison. The men thus raised reach a total of 3684 horse and 31,955 foot, and do not of course represent the whole military strength of the country. The necessity for mustering every man of military age was not to arise until the following year. In addition to these native troops, Henry's agents were busy in Germany contracting with mercenary captains for bands of schwartzritters and lanzknechts to join him at Calais and bring up his numbers to the 42,000 demanded by the treaty. The size of this army does not seem very great in comparison with modern hosts, but when it is remembered that the entire population of the country was probably under four millions, the magnitude of the undertaking is seen in a truer light.

The soldier of the sixteenth century was expected to bring his own horse, weapons, and defensive armour to the muster, although a reserve to replace worn-out equipment was usually provided by the authorities. A partial uniform was issued — described technically as a "coat," and costing 3s. 4d. or 4s.—which appears actually to have included hose as well as tunic. Coats, together with conduct money at the rate of ½d. a mile, were served out to the men before they set forth for the general rendezvous. They then made the best of their way thither in small bands under their local leaders, travelling in what way they pleased, so long as they appeared in good condition

[1] Letters and Papers, xix., Pt. I., No. 273.

by the appointed date. The number of men in each detachment varied greatly, the average being about fifteen. As an example, the list of Kentish men serving with the vanguard may be cited :—

Thos. Wiott, 100 men ; John Culpeper, 18 ; Thos. Roydon, 6 ; Edw. Isaac, 10 ; John Sybill, 10 ; Sir Hen. Isley, 38 ; Ric. Pottar, 3 ; Sir Reignold Scott, 34 ; Sir John Fogge, 12 ; Walter Moyle, 5 ; Sir Thos. Moyle, 12 : Mr Sydley, 20 ; Sir Thos. Willoughby, 10 ; Paul Sydner, 4 ; George Whetenall, 5 ; Wm. Boyes, 12.

If the majority of the gentlemen named went in person to the war, it is obvious that many must have served in the ranks, for only two officers were allowed for every hundred men.

While the lists of men were being prepared, other agents of the Government were busily surveying the resources of the country for the supply of the force. Assessments were fixed for each county for its quota of transport horses, carts, oxen, sheep, grain, malt, beans, and other necessaries. Commissioners then appeared to acquaint the local authorities with their obligations and to pick out the best animals and *matériel* with the assistance of the justices of the peace. They were so to frame their requirements that agriculture should not unduly suffer, but at the same time it was understood that no man might refuse his goods for the King's service. Warning was given of the date at which delivery was to be made at the county towns, and every article was to be paid for as soon as it was handed over to the commissioners.[1] This punctual payment is very characteristic of all the Government's transactions. Soldiers received their wages without undue delay, and were scrupulously given their conduct money to the last halfpenny when dismissed to their homes. Contractors were equally well treated, and Henry, if his financial straits compelled him to default, preferred to do so by repudiating a loan levied on the whole country, when all suffered in just proportion, rather than by breaking faith with individuals. In consequence we find an entire absence of reports of grumbling or backwardness. The Government was in entire touch with the people, and the army was an integral part of the people, served wholeheartedly by men of every degree.

A bird's-eye view of our island — such a view as the limners of the period loved to depict — would show in the early days of May 1544 such a picture of martial activity as was not to recur until the approach of the Armada. In the distant north there would appear the sails of Lisle's fleet clustering in the Firth of Forth, the smoke of Leith and Edinburgh rising to proclaim the doings of Hertford's army; across the Marches swift bands of horsemen spurring to join in the work of desolation; the

[1] Letters and Papers, xix., Pt. I., No. 272.

northern counties quiet and peaceful, their part in the year's task already done; throughout the midlands and the south innumerable bands of soldiers marching by every road, some to the East Anglian ports, some to London, some to Dover, and intermingled with them long lines of waggons and droves of cattle. In every haven between Yarmouth and Southampton the merchantmen are stayed, foreign as well as English, awaiting the order to embark the troops. In the dockyards of the Thames, of Rye, and of Portsmouth, shipwrights work unceasingly and labourers raise bulwarks and dig trenches. Romney Marsh is dotted with cattle and sheep destined to feed the invading hosts. And up and down the Channel and along all the coast of France range the privateers of the west country, already laying the foundations of their Elizabethan fame.

In the heart of all this pulsing activity sat the King and his Council, a body of servants such as any monarch might have been proud to command. A Privy Councillorship was then no empty honour. It was to be purchased only by evident capacity to serve the State in some important branch of its affairs; and the men who had attained it by the last decade of Henry's reign were of diverse types and origins. Foremost among the veterans were the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the former now a soured old man, who had suffered many things, and was yet to suffer more. A participant in every campaign since Flodden, he was conversant to his finger-tips with the business of war. His temperament was the reverse of sanguine, and his caustic letters, often filled with unpleasant facts which he refused to blink, served as a needful brake upon incautious ambitions. Suffolk is the typical bluff Englishman of Henry's court. Hearty and outspoken, he possessed the faculty of making more friends than enemies, and played many parts with uniform success. His talent lay rather in filling with dignity a weighty office than in the practical business wherein Norfolk excelled. Chief of the younger generation were Stephen Gardiner, the cunning intriguer and watchful diplomatist, never entirely trusted by the King, yet contriving to make himself indispensable by his conduct of the Imperial Alliance; and Lisle, the Lord Admiral, ranking equally with Hertford, the soldier. Lisle as Admiral had shown his good qualities in the Scottish campaign. He was destined to retain his command throughout the war now in progress, a war from the naval point of view the most important in which England had yet engaged, and to repeat the Scottish exploit, again in conjunction with Hertford, in 1547. Hertford was an exponent of the new military ideas of the continent. He distrusted the irregular methods of the Border horsemen, and put his faith in gunners and hackbuteers. He would rather, he said, have a hundred of the latter to serve

against the Scots than five hundred spears. Hertford and Lisle were an excellent pair of subordinates to a king like Henry VIII., who knew how to control them. When the strong hand was removed they mistook their talents for genius, and came to bloody ends.[1] Such were the most notable in a body of men which included several others of ability. Although the registers of the Council's meetings and business are unfortunately lost for the period stretching from July 22, 1543, to May 10, 1545, sufficient evidence remains to show that it was the King's indispensable machine for ordering the war, and that all the executive functions of government were in its hands. It should be noted that the whole body took cognisance of both naval and military affairs, there being no special Ministers for the different departments.

By the end of May the troops were beginning to concentrate at their ports of embarkation. The whole army was organised in three great divisions, the vanguard and the rearguard, each of 13,000 men (including foreign mercenaries to join at Calais), and the "battle," 16,000 strong. The Duke of Norfolk was to conduct the vanguard, and Lord Russell, Lord Privy Seal, the rearguard. The battle was to be under the leadership of Suffolk, lieutenant-general for the King, until such time as his Majesty should himself take over the command.

At the mustering-places both horse and foot were organised in companies of 100 men, each under a captain and petty captain. No mention is to be found of any other subordinate officers, although doubtless the redundant gentlemen for whom there were no commissions did good service in this capacity. They were allowed no pay beyond that of the private soldier. The rates of pay were as follows: Horse, captains 6s. per day, petty captains 3s., soldiers 9d.; foot, captains 4s., petty captains 2s., soldiers 6d. Gunners, a corps of whom were regularly retained at the Tower and other fortresses, were paid 8d. a day, master-gunners receiving 4s. As has been explained, the cost of rations was deducted from these payments.

The organisation of both horse and foot is fully set forth in 'A book of orders for the war both by sea and land written by Thomas Audley at the command of King Henry the Eighth,' of which the date of composition is 1546.[2] Being written after the war, it probably tends to represent the ideal rather than the actual practice. The horse, says

[1] Hertford is better known as the Duke of Somerset, executed in 1552; and Lisle as Duke of Northumberland, executed 1553.

[2] Harleian MSS., 309. The date is fixed by a reference to the death of Sir Ralph Ellercar, who was killed in a skirmish near Boulogne on April 25, 1546. The treatise must therefore have been written between that date and January 28, 1547, when Henry himself died. The military portion is repeated, with much additional matter, in another manuscript of Audley's (Additional, 23,971), which seems to be of later composition.

Audley, should be in the proportion of one heavy man-at-arms to three, four, or five light horsemen. The different grades in their order were first the barded or full lance, both man and horse being sheathed in armour; next the demi-lance, the man alone being armoured; then the mounted hackbuteer or mounted archer; then the light-armed pricker, carrying a boar-spear and useful for scouting and pursuit; and, finally, the page to attend the fighting men and carry their headpieces on the march. These different types were all mingled in the same unit in the above-named proportions. Some trace of regimental organisation is to be seen in the recommendation that to every 600 of mixed horsemen there should be issued a standard, a guidon, and a pennon, the standard only to go into action if the whole body accompanied it. In practice it seems to have been the custom to combine any number of companies into a temporary regiment under a "coronell," a rank which makes its first appearance in the English army in this war.

Similarly the foot were to be divided into shot (archers or hackbuteers), pikes, and halberds or bills. In a small force one-third were to be shot, in a larger one the proportion might be safely reduced to one-fourth or one-fifth. The pikemen were to be drawn up in a massive square or oblong, impermeable to any charge so long as it was not called upon to change ground. In front of them there might be one rank or at most two of billmen, ready to drag the opposing horsemen from their saddles with their hooked weapons. When matters became too hot, the billmen might take refuge by crouching under the long projecting pikes behind. The archers and hackbuteers were to be disposed on either flank of the square. It was laid down that twenty per cent of the pikes and billmen should wear steel corselets and be placed in the front ranks; but archers and hackbuteers were not to be armoured, save for a morion or sallet upon their heads.

Audley has nothing to say concerning artillery, neither does he state his opinion as to the relative merits of bows and firearms. Rightly or wrongly, the Tudor policy had hitherto been to encourage archery by legislative enactments against the use of "handguns." Consequently there were very few native hackbuteers in this army. But Hertford and other innovators were strongly in favour of the newer weapon, and it is clear that from this time forward the bow tended to fall into some discredit. The longbow in English hands had important advantages in accuracy and rapidity of fire. The real reason for its disuse seems to have been that firearms had a greater moral effect, and that armour had been so improved as to render its wearers almost immune from arrow wounds. Nothing but a heavy bullet at close range

would penetrate the ponderous steel shell of the sixteenth-century lanzknecht.

Other papers contain details of the artillery considered necessary for an army of 42,000 men. Distributed among the three divisions were 5 bombards, 14 cannon (60-pdrs.), 19 demi-cannon (30-pdrs.), 1 cannon-perer, 25 culverins, 22 demi-culverins, 40 sakers, 29 falcons, 50 mortars, and 13 other guns. This proportion was very much greater than that used in Scotland, and was only provided because sieges of strong towns were in prospect. In the ordnance department were also carried reserve small-arms, bows, arrows, pikes, tools for mining, entrenching, and hedge-clearing, canvas, parchment and paper for cartridges, spare wheels and harness and many other stores. For the transport of these articles over the roads of the period an immense provision of horses had to be made. One cannon with its equipment required thirty-five horses.

The arrangements for the feeding of the army from England have already been noted. Supplies were also drawn from the Low Countries, where the English Company of Merchant Adventurers, whose headquarters were at Antwerp, acted as the King's agents. Henry sometimes imposed hard tasks upon his servants. Francis Hall, a man-at-arms of Calais, was sent into Flanders to levy single-handed 1500 teamsters and 3000 draught-horses, and to conduct them to Calais, making his own arrangements for feeding by the way. Although he incurred some censure for dilatoriness, he managed to perform the greater part of his instructions. Beer, beef, and bread were regarded as essentials to an English army in the field. Large quantities of beer were brought from Flanders, and portable brew-houses and bakehouses, a new invention, accompanied the army in the field. Apparently the former were not a success. On July 5, Norfolk with the vanguard wrote to Suffolk at Calais to hasten the supply, as the soldiers had drunk nothing but water for ten days, "which is strange for Englishmen to do with so little grudging. We desire you also," he continues, "to send us a dozen or twenty tun of good English beer, for us old fellows to drink, who can ill away with Flemish coyte."

The finance of a three months' campaign was estimated in advance. For the pay, equipment, and supply of the army of invasion, a sum of £200,000 was allocated; for the fleet to hold the Straits and the Western Channel, £10,000; for keeping the Borders, £12,000; for the garrison and works at Portsmouth, £3000; for the garrisons of Calais and Guisnes, £8000; for the Queen's household, £5000; for Prince Edward's, £2000; reserve, £10,000; total, £250,000. It is somewhat difficult to compare the value of money in Tudor times with that at the

present day. As far as the bare necessaries of life are concerned, its purchasing power was about eight times as much in 1544 as it is now. But the cost of all manufactured goods and of transport and travelling was infinitely greater in proportion to that of food than is at present the case, and it is evident that notwithstanding the great wealth confiscated from the Church, Henry's resources were strained to breaking-point by this war. The war also, as often happens in such cases, was of much longer duration than was calculated beforehand.

The moneys available to defray the expenses were to be drawn from many sources, some being quite trivial in extent. From the last subsidy, or tax on lands and incomes, there remained a balance of £8000; the sale of crown lands produced £60,000; the Church, £10,000; English merchants, £10,000; foreigners resident in England, £10,000; sale of lead, mainly from the roofs of dismantled abbeys, £50,000; the King's debts and ordinary revenue, £10,000. For the greater part of the balance loans had to be raised on the Continent at ruinous rates of interest, rising from 12 to 14 and even 16 per cent as the contest continued. Forced loans levied in England yielded no great sums, and were practically indistinguishable from taxation, since Parliament usually legalised their repudiation. A much more questionable expedient was the extensive debasement of the coinage, now resorted to for the first time.

By the middle of June the greater part of the van and rearguards had already crossed the Channel, embarking at Harwich, Ipswich, London, Dover, Rye, and Winchelsea. The horses were conveyed in "playtes," apparently flat-bottomed craft of special construction. Russell, the commander of the rearguard, describes how he saw the Pool of London full of shipping laden with troops and waiting to go down on the tide. Other soldiers were camping on the wharves and in the streets, awaiting their turn; and the roads leading to the south-eastern ports were thronged. The "battle" followed at the end of the month, and on the 15th of July the King himself arrived at Calais.

The original plan of campaign, by which King and Emperor were to make a joint advance on Paris, was soon abandoned. Each ally was too intent on capturing towns in his immediate sphere of influence, and the armies never joined hands. Norfolk and Russell, with their respective divisions, were ordered to reduce Montreuil, while Henry himself led the main body to the siege of Boulogne. The wisdom of his action has been much called in question. But personal considerations bulked larger than in modern times, and the King's honour would have been touched if he had returned to England without winning a pitched battle, or taking some conspicuous place

well known to his subjects. He calculated also that the loss of Boulogne, touching also the honour of Francis I., would give the latter sufficient employment in schemes for its recapture to prevent him from interfering in Scotland, the real objective of English policy.

The two sieges then were pressed with equal vigour. The incidents of both are full of interest, and are to be found at length in the State Papers of the time.[1] That of Montreuil failed to prosper, notwithstanding that the lords and gentlemen worked in person with the spade to set the soldiers a good example. Norfolk was a strict disciplinarian. Two of his soldiers, straying out of camp without leave, were captured by the French, and came in to obtain their ransoms. The Duke instantly hanged them both as a warning to others. At Boulogne there were daily bombardments, sorties, and skirmishes. The town was slowly but surely pounded into submission, and surrendered on September 14. Two days later Charles V. made a separate peace with France, and his ally was left to carry on the war alone.

This desertion, which aroused extreme indignation in England, altered the whole aspect of the war. Henry was at once thrown upon the defensive, for Francis had great armies in the field on the German and Italian frontiers, and was now free to direct them all against his northern foe. Norfolk was immediately ordered to raise the siege of Montreuil and march his force to the defence of Boulogne, already threatened by the Dauphin's army before its walls had been repaired. Boulogne secured, the King hastily returned to England to organise resistance to the storm which he knew would shortly burst upon him. Even before his return, significant orders had been given that commissioners should take order in every shire for the mustering of every man of military age at an hour's notice.

JAMES A. WILLIAMSON.

[1] A journal of the entire campaign is in Cotton MSS., Calig. E. IV. f. 57, printed in Rymer's 'Foedera,' xv. p. 52.

(To be continued.)

MINERVA AND THE HOUSEBOAT.

It has always been one of the crosses of life that Minerva and I cannot take our holidays together. In civilised places we read the same books, play the same games, like the same people, have much the same ideas about ultimate things, but Minerva will not rough it. She has never possessed a pair of strong boots, she cannot drink out of thick cups, and the mere vicinity of an insect makes her uncomfortable.

We both like travel books, but for different reasons. The volumes I read with envy Minerva enjoys with a furtive humorous malice. She reclines on soft cushions and follows the self-inflicted miseries of fanatics on icebergs or deserts or mountain-chains. She is particularly well up in Arctic exploration. But she prefers to read of women-travellers being eaten alive deservedly — she is not deceived by the pretext of science — by mosquitoes, or, worse, their hands and faces blistered by the sun. She has a certain smile which draws me curiously to her shoulder sometimes when she is reading. It will be a picture of a blizzard in "Misery Camp," the tents battened down, and a human figure emerging from one of them, a living icicle; or a tropical scene, with a photograph of some uncouth sportswoman with short, fat, puttied legs, who travels for pleasure and loses her temper at every rub.

"I am sure she beats her coolies," Minerva says, turning over the pages daintily.

A holiday is incomplete without Minerva; yet the primitive and pagan in me must be indulged, and my Elysium is her Tartarus — a kind of illimitable snipe-jheel, with blue mountains on the horizon and a strange wild country beyond. Here Minerva pictures me wallowing in mud and blood. It is true I like mud, and I do not mind a little blood. A few drops spilt on one's cut-shorts are sacrificial, the rite we pay to the little cave-man within us when we cast the social slough. And I like to feel my neck and knees bare to the wind and sun. I like to bathe in a lake or stream and dry in a warm breeze, lying in grass and flowers — one's pipe is sweeter for the absence of a shirt; and I like to feel a few warm feathers sticking to my sleeve or the scales of a fish. The smell of these things is sweet — it brings one nearer earth.

Yet I find that I am not such good company to myself as I was. I get home-sick sooner. Also Minerva loves travel, she says, if she does not have to rough it. She likes to be there, but not to go. She does not mind the simple life. So we hit on the houseboat as a kind of

limbo — a between-state, in which we both might be content. A simple device which we might have thought of before. Minerva was to meet me on the Woolar Lake in Kashmir on my way back from a trek in the snows. We had heard of a nicely furnished boat with its staff of servants ready. My last stage would take me straight into her drawing-room. That she might be delivered from all spiders, daddy-long-legs, mosquitoes, hard beds, coarse crockery — all roughnesses, by the way, — was my constant litany.

I shall never forget my first glimpse of the Woolar Lake from the pass above Tragbal. Drought and vertical cliffs had been my portion for the last five weeks, and water in the form of turbid glacier streams at an angle of forty-five degrees. I longed for level spaces. And here was a plain twenty-five miles broad, glittering in the sun like a coat of divers colours, varied by the different crops — young rice, ripe corn, the rich green of the maize, the yellowish-brown seed-flax, the red and ochre of the parched *karewas*, relieved by clustered villages embowered in walnut, poplar, and chenar, a broad slow river winding through it, and at my feet a wide expanse of still water on which boats floated lazily. This is the best view in Kashmir, I thought, and wondered if *The Snark* were in the creek. I camped that night on an exposed spur in the forest between two beacon fires, my prearranged signal with Minerva.

The Snark was in port all right — a clean dainty boat, with an interior worthy of Minerva. A stiff white tablecloth and fruit and drinks on the table, frilled muslin curtains, cushions, rugs, books, newspapers, and other good things which one can appreciate when they have ceased to be a matter of course — especially if one has earned them by the expenditure of all waste tissue. They offered the picture of a month's ideal loafing.

Nevertheless the beginnings of our cruise were not auspicious. First there were the mosquitoes. They were so persistent and venomous that we gave up the idea of exploring the lake, and made for less swampy surroundings. Minerva lunched in gloves and veil. Eventually we were driven into our mosquito-curtains, feeling as if we had been licked all over by a flame. I had not roughed it so much for months.

Then there was Mustâq. The second course at lunch betrayed him — a chicken mould of a peculiar shape, fortified by tomato slips with a sliced egg on the top, the palpable handiwork of the *badmash* who had been my *khansamah* (cook) in camp. A lazy, malingering, thievish, plausible fellow, who had looted the villagers, turned up late in camp, kept me waiting for meals, and destroyed an otherwise respectable temper and digestion.

Through his pilferings I had been reduced to commissariat tea, bazaar coffee, "scissors" cigarettes, and other sundry abominations, until I had met a Samaritan on the road and messed with him the last two stages. I had dismissed the man on the spot, and here he was on the boat—a hideous resurrection.

"Good heavens," I said to Minerva, "you have got Mustâq!"

"Didn't you send him on?"

"I sacked him."

It appeared that Mustâq had arrived the evening before, all salaams, saying that the Sahib had sent him on to get everything ready. Minerva had had to leave the boat-cook behind at Srinagar, as his sobriety had left much to be desired. She thought Mustâq a dear old man, so polite and willing, "a little ugly perhaps." He had a face like a Jew transmogrified into a goat, something remotely Semitic and capricious. He was of mixed ancestry, a Pathan father and a Kashmiri woman of the Lolab valley, and he had inherited the virtues and good looks of neither.

"The infernal old humbug," I said. "I suppose we are saddled with him."

Still he had prepared a very tolerable lunch. Minerva was all for giving him another chance. The easy *régime* of a houseboat might mean reformation, though I had failed to whip the offending Adam out of him.

We could not leave Bandipur that night. The manjhi was afraid to put out into the lake. These boats are high and have no draught; a squall upsets them. We took refuge in the mosquito-curtains. We read and dozed and talked to each other through gauze. The idea occurred to us of being fed through the net, but we made brave sallies to the dining-room. The next day, too, we had to keep under cover. We punted across the lake, two poles in punt and a paddle behind, the cook-boat and shikara following in our wake. When we reached firm earth on the Jhelum bank the towing-rope was brought out. Here the enemy were not in such force, and we emerged and walked by the side.

The next morning we breakfasted in peace, both agreed on the definition of happiness—the absence of mosquitoes. It gradually began to dawn on us that Minerva would not have to rough it at all, and that I had laid the ghost of the cave-man in me for at least a month. *The Snark* was going to be a success.

II.

Srinagar was our first port. For some reason the mosquito-limit is a fixed geographical boundary at this time of the year. We left it behind at Sumbal, and were troubled no

more. At Srinagar we moored in the Jhelum two miles above the city, but spent most of our days on the Dal Lake or in the old Mogul gardens that slope down to it. The city itself reeks with the dirt of ages. The Mar Canal, which runs through the most picturesque quarter, is only approachable when it is flushed by the fresh snow-water in spring. But in the evening sometimes we would drop down the Jhelum between the seven bridges; in the open stream one is assailed only by intermittent whiffs. Like all dirty, picturesque old Eastern cities built on a river bank, it is best seen from a boat. One escapes the smells and the pressing crowds, and the pert, inquisitive children who follow on one's heels; and the household routine goes on as one glides slowly by. It is the women who give colour to the scene. They are always working or gossiping by the riverside, cleaning their brass pots, or washing their clothes, or weaving, or grinding corn. Their features are regular, their eyes bright and clear. The young girls are unusually fair; in Europe they would be taken for Jewesses. They wear a kind of jibbah with loose, upturned sleeves; the brilliant colours—magenta, green, terra-cotta, purple—glow in strong relief against the quiet tones of the old wood and brick. We passed a marriage party going down-stream to the village of the bride; or perhaps the husband was taking her to his home. A bright canopy was hung over the prow, and they were all singing. "Happy" is the translation of the Eastern word the family would apply to the chorus, but to our ears their music is infinitely sad. The marriage chant sounded like a dirge.

A pretty girl looked out at us from a latticed balcony on the third storey. A young man by her side took her by the elbow and thrust her roughly back into the chamber. But there was no finality in the action, and she came out to peep at us again. For her sake we looked down. An old hag next door stared at us unreproved, — a commonplace little allegory for the moralist which I will not pursue. The wicked occidental habit of peering about for pretty faces is wickeder in the East. The Oriental, as a rule, has better manners than we in this respect, but we passed a family barge in which a consequential young Mussulman was sitting before his two wives. As we approached he gave the nearest an unceremonious nudge, as much as to say, "Look quickly, here is something you will not see again." And the two bourkhas bent forward so that I could see the eyes peering through the veil at Minerva. But they did not turn round. At the next ghat an English girl had braved the smells and was sitting on the steps painting. She wore a brown dress with a low neck, and her complexion was very fair. Every figure that passed made her look more dainty and clean.

Earthquakes may demolish Srinagar, but the city will

always be picturesque. With the brick and stone and wood now used, even the new houses look old. Rasula, the manjhi, told me that there were a thousand mosques and ziarats in the city, and I can well believe it. All the buildings are balconied; most of them have three or four storeys. The windows and eaves are richly fretted; at the corners of the roof the cedar wood is carved and ornamented, generally in the shape of hanging campanulas. The wood is of a rich dark grain. The bricks are small and dark—they never have that ugly new yellowish-red tint which we think of as brick colour. But it is the roofs that give the city its peculiar charm. They are flat, or gently sloping, and covered with earth. Each roof is a garden. In spring they are bright with iris and crocus, and in the autumn they are coloured with the quiet tints of the dried leaves and grasses.

The waterways by the lake have another charm. We spent many a lazy morning in the channels by the Dal watching the craft coming back from the floating gardens with their market produce. The boats are of all sizes, from the heavy thatched grain-barges that house a family to the light shikara. They are paddled or punted; sometimes an old woman or a small girl in a purple or magenta shift will be the sole crew; or there may be the three ages of women in the same boat. They are carrying vegetables or fruit or fodder to the city—cucumbers and melons and singara nuts, coxcombs for colouring food, marigolds, lotus pods, white lotus-stalks gathered under water near the root, and tied up in bunches like celery. We pass a boatload of enormous pumpkins, propelled slowly by a quiet old hag in the prow; shikaras laden with wood or hay or water-weed, rushes for matting, or reed for thatch. The water-weed is for cow-fodder; the reek of it is sweet in the sun. The sodden green willow wood is stowed for winter fuel. It has a peculiar pungent smell when drying, which is as sweet as the hay, because of some vague memory it stirs, so vague as to be little more than a sensation. We pass a barge of wise contented-looking sheep changing pasture; as it touches land the leaders step ashore in a matter-of-fact way, as if they were in charge and had demanded the ferry. The splash of crimson emerging from a shaded willow alley is a barge loaded with coxcomb, pure crimson-lake. There are gardens of it in the dry patches between the dykes, a rich warm glow of colour. And there are fields of marigolds which every orthodox Pandit brings daily to strew on the lingam, or in the niches by the altar. We pass a village with a temple to Siva, and another with a ziarat built of cedar and red brick, with a thatched roof covered with irises in seed, and shaded by chenars. It contains a hair of the prophet's beard.

There is a tinge of autumn in the air and in the trees.

The reed-beds are brown or sulphury, the sapphire of the kingfisher on the wall is brighter against the yellowing mulberry leaves; there is a rufous fringe under the bank, and in the water the surface weeds are tinted. We pass orchards of apples and yellow crinkled quinces, and plantations of young willows, intersected by innumerable creeks, at the end of which there is always a glimpse of the hills, sometimes the yellow rock of Hari Parbat, with the old fort sprawling over it, or the thimble-like Takht-i-Suleiman, or the brown crags above the Dal, or to the south the Pir Pinjal rimmed with fresh snow.

These late September mornings follow one another in peaceful succession; a turquoise sky with barely a cloud, a fresh nipping air which makes one feel as if one has just bathed; and a sweet smell everywhere so long as one avoids man.

Rasula, our boatman, and his mate, belong to the aristocracy of the river. It adds to one's content to be propelled sympathetically by men one knows and likes. We gather much lore from them.

Farther down the stream we came upon three legendary stones, two in the channel, one half covered by willows in a ditch. Rasula told us that these were once bad men, who had been petrified for some wickedness. One is a matting-maker who spoke false words; another a Goojar who put water in the milk; another a Dhobie who stole a silken robe, or, as others say, a Bunniah who dealt crookedly.

"As to-day," I said.

"Ha, sahib, as to-day," the manjhis echoed sorrowfully. "What a stone-heap the land would be if such justice were meted out to-day."

"Ha, sahib, a veritable stone-heap," intones Stroke.

"Assuredly a heap of stones," echoes Bow.

"Are not the people afraid?"

"But it was so long ago."

"Is not Khud[1] as powerful now?"

"Khud knows," intones Stroke.

"Khud is all-knowing, but his ways are dark," echoes Bow.

. . . . . .

Minerva and I were agreed that the person most in danger of petrification in all Kashmir was Mustâq. I came in the next morning at the hour of accounts.

"All sahibs pay eight annas a-day for wood," he was saying.

"Mustâq," I began gravely, "there are three stones in the canal at Kraliyar, you are aware. These were once wicked men. Now, if . . ."

"Sahib," the old man said, in a voice that vibrated with injured feeling, "I have never defrauded any sahib or mem-sahib. God is witness of my doings. If I have taken one pice that is the mem-sahib's, may I be struck . . ."

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[1] God.

The invocation was so solemn and awful I half expected to see the old man fall on the carpet. Minerva interposed hurriedly to save him.

"But the mem-sahib in the next boat only pays three annas."

"Ha, mem-sahib. But that mem-sahib has lunch served cold. Moreover, the Huzoor and the mem-sahib have hot baths in the morning and in the evening; but the mem-sahib in the next boat only bathes . . ."

"Never mind the mem-sahib on the next boat," I said. "Write down three."

The figure of Mustâq underwent a subtle change. His shoulders, back, and neck became reproachfully limp and martyr-like as he resigned himself to the loss of five annas a-day, almost as much as half his pay.

"We, too, will have a cold lunch to-day," Minerva added consolingly. "We are taking tiffin out to the Nishat Bagh."

"As the lady sahib pleases."

The tone of his voice as he retreated implied as clearly as the spoken words, though quite consistently with respect, "I am a poor, honest, wronged man. But with such sahibs and mem-sahibs argument and justice are alike impossible."

We both felt uncomfortable.

"Are you sure three annas are enough?" Minerva said.

III.

The Nishat Bagh is approached by the open lake. It is probably the most beautiful old garden in the East,—seven wide green terraces of smooth-cut lawn, with bold hills behind and the lake in front. As in all these old Mogul gardens, a spring-fed conduit runs down the centre, dropping from terrace to terrace by a series of cascades into reservoirs in which fountains are playing. The Nishat is more park-like than the others; it is more directly under the crags, and the lotuses grow almost up to the old lodge at the foot. The stone conduit is bordered by paths with flower-beds on each side, which are intersected by other paths as in old French gardens. The flowers are generally the highest and crudest that grow, but the beds of aster, zinnia, salvia, canna, which would be ugly and garish on an English lawn, are appropriate here; the warm massed colour is subdued in the open spaces under the shade of the great trees; it glows softly, like a crimson spot on a moth's wing. The lawns on each side are symmetrically planted with magnificent chenars, which date from Akbar's time. I wondered why this most artificial of gardens left no impression of artifice. The symmetry and formalism of it are on such a large scale, and in such a large natural setting, that it has become part of the landscape; the hill and

lake are brought in. Man has effaced himself in his work. A miniature garden here would have looked like a reclaimed patch, trivial and temporary, a vain meddling with nature and a perversion of her ends. As it is, the trim details at one's feet and the grandeur and distance blend as in the mellow canvas of an old master or as in the description of Eden in 'Paradise Lost.' The Nishat Bagh is an epic in gardens.

We spread our rugs and cushions under the largest and shadiest chenar, and prepared ourselves for an idle day. How distant was any sense of discomfort now! Minerva, cool and reposeful in the shade, looked like a princess who had sauntered into the Trianon for a siesta under the trees. There was no spider or mosquito or earwig near to molest her. We had taken Vigne's travels and 'Jocaste et le chat maigre,' which we exchanged and discussed lazily. The title of the French book had always fascinated me. I wondered if the cat was thin because Jocaste was poor or unkind. Or perhaps it was only thin when it entered the story and grew fat afterwards. I had pictured Jocaste working for it, a little grisette in a black dress with a V-shaped opening at the bosom, sitting in a bare unfurnished atelier with a canary in a cage, looking out into the Luxembourg Gardens. I was disappointed when I found that there were two tales, and that there were no mysterious relations between the cat and the enigmatic lady, and worse, that there was no real cat to drag its lean and hungry length through the story at all.

As Minerva fell asleep I took Vigne from her lap. He had walked and talked in the Shalimar and Nishat gardens only eighty years ago, yet he seems almost as old-world as the Moguls with whose shadows he peopled "the gay shining walks" of "this once royal garden." I could see the Isle of Chenars where he and Dr Henderson and Baron Hugel met in 1838 and agreed to put up a tablet in memory of their visit. They drafted the inscription and obtained leave from Runjit Singh. The names of former travellers were to be inscribed: Bernier 1663, Forster 1786, Moorcroft, Trebeck, and Guthrie 1823, Jacquemont 1831, Wolff 1832. Vigne does not seem to have heard of Manucci. There were only eight, but the paper was not large enough. Either their own names or those of the previous travellers had to be written in small type. The dilemma was easily solved. "One of the party made us laugh by giving utterance to a sentiment which we could neither of us deny to be our own. Oh, damn 'the previous travellers'! Get in our names as large as you can." The tablet was raised, not without passive resistance, but even before Vigne left the valley he had doubts of its permanence. He suspected that Gulab Singh and Dhihan Singh would be jealous

of "the substantial presence of European names in a country they intended to make themselves masters of upon Runjit's decease." He feared — very justly as it proved—that the next of his countrymen who looked for it would find it gone. Should such be the case he hoped the traveller would replace it, "and if he have the *esprit de corps* of a traveller there is no occasion to give the reason." Delightful naïveté.

When Minerva had opened her eyes—"woken up" is too gross a term for that subtle transformation—and made the tea, we explored the garden before reluctantly taking ourselves off. It is an Eden, but an Eden with a serpent. At the upper end the stairway leading from one terrace to another passes through a passage open at the top to the sky. We had just come up and were standing near the coping, when Minerva, who was nearer than I, heard it arrive. She touched my arm, and I saw a huge four-foot snake swishing up the stairs on its belly scales. It rested on the top steps and surveyed the garden with undulations of its horrid thin head. A harmless brute, but incompatible with the presence of Minerva. I stoned it into a hollow tree. Going down, Minerva walked behind me.

"There are always two," she said.

We push out into the open lake through a sea of lotuses. A few of the pinky-white flowers remain; the cup-like seed-pods are already purpling. We watch the terns, the grebes, the jaçanas, the fish-eagles; the kingfisher dropping like a plumb-line from its crumpled lotus leaf, the dark-red dragonflies, the happy fish burrowing lazily into the green underworld.

We are far out in the open water, when a sudden storm comes up the valley. A black vertical shaft of rain, with a furnace glare behind it, is deluging Baramulla: it vanishes in grey mist, and another falls nearer the lake. The light poplars bend and shiver in flurried agitation, each with its head strained towards the East as if it would escape. Rasula and the boatmen chatter in dismay and thresh the water with their paddles, too excited now for any rhythm. They leave their course and make for shore, the breeze following in little freshets as if gathering strength. Just as the nose of the boat rustles among the reeds a stillness falls on the lake. The storm has turned in its track and is ravaging Apharwat—which is now lost in darkness. But the sun has broken through the rim of cloud, and the snow-peaks to the end of the valley turn from grey to rose. We enter a channel which we should not have discovered if it had not been for the storm. The lake is bathed in colour—the lotus leaves are lifted gently by the breeze, the vivid green of the underleaf catching the slanting light; there is a golden glow on the water-weed, beyond and behind it the dark-green belt of the poplars and willows.

Soon the last sigh and rustle of the wind dies away, and in the stillness the fairy-haunted ruins of the Peri Mahal loom through the mysterious blue haze, calling us up into the darkening hills away from the lights of the city.

"Isn't it a spook of a ruin!" Minerva says.

IV.

The next day we spent in the Shalimar Bagh. The garden does not fall in broad sweeps as does the Nishat, from the mountain to the lake. The hills recede from it, and it is approached by a channel between willows almost a mile long. The chenars are not so grand, the terraces not so high; but it is the more old-world garden of the two. It is beautiful in another way. The Nishat does not belong so much to a period, its human associations are slighter; it is part of the landscape. The Shalimar is a seventeenth-century garden of the Kings of Delhi. One feels the Moguls there. I think the impression left by the Taj Mahal contributes subtly to the effect. For this was the scene of the romance of Jehangir and Nur Mahal. The architecture, too, though not strictly Mogul, helps — the painted lattices richly fretted, the roofs of cedar and old wooden tiles, the black marble pillars with their strangely ornamented capitols that branch out to support the eaves, the Saracenic arches, the cypresses by the reservoirs with the hundred fountains, the cascades of old limestone niched for the lights which gleam at night behind the falling water. And within the arcade the Persian frescoes on the wall, and the stag-heads holding sconces, give the place a look of habitation.

The garden is probably in better repair than when Vigne saw it in 1838. Ranjit Singh's governors were vandals; they cut down the trees, white-washed the black marble, and were generally very indifferent inheritors of the cultured Mogul. Vigne was received by Mian Singh in the Shalimar with great patronage. He found the Sikh sitting in state surrounded by his officers and wearing the gorgeous costume of his race, a single-threaded shawl turban and a Kashmirian heron's plume. It was a tedious entertainment. After a few meaningless and unintelligent questions he had to sit and watch the singing and dancing while the Governor slowly fuddled himself with the strong spirit of the country. Vigne sketched while Mian Singh slept off the effects of the debauch. He describes how heartily tired he was of the Nautch girls, and how relieved when the "Colonel Sahib" called for his matchlock and proposed to shoot at a mark, though he was too fat to stand on his legs and too tipsy to hold his gun straight. "The Governor was so unsteady by

the quantity of spirit he had taken that his matchlock could not compete with my double-barrel. . . .!"

But it is with Jehangir and Nur Mahal that the Shalimar is associated. It is the garden where the "Imperial Selim" held the feast celebrated in 'Lalla Rookh,' at which the lovers became reconciled. I was delighted to find that Minerva thought all this pother was about a gentleman of the name of Rook, the prefix "Lala" having much the same significance in the Punjab as "Babu" in Bengal. When we got back to Srinagar we looked Moore up in a preface to his poems and found that he was given an unconditional three thousand guineas for the poem, however and wherever he liked to produce it. Those were fat years for the poetaster. One can believe that this inane sugary stuff was lapped up by the middle classes as pure Hippocrene less than a century ago, but that it should have been commended by Jeffrey and taken seriously as poetry by the lions of the day seems an odd vagary of literary taste. Minerva suggested that we were setting up our own idols for posterity to play ninepins with. But where are they? We ourselves are chary of filling our niches. We have lost too many illusions. Hero-worship is as dead as bigotry. We have grown captious and old.

"When Day had hid his sultry flame
Behind the palms of Baramoule,
When maids began to lift their heads
Refresh'd from their embroider'd beds."

Where are the palms? What insects haunt the embroidered beds? Let us hope the ladies of Baramoule had a different kind of fragrance in Jehangir's day.

If there is one part of 'Lalla Rookh' that we might have patience with now, it would be the prose interludes in which the chamberlain Fadladeen threatens the poet with the Chabuk. But Longman's knew their public. The three thousand pounds was a good speculation. Seven large editions were sold out in the first year. Also the work was acclaimed as accurate in detail and colour. Travellers said that the descriptions were so exact that Moore had studied Oriental literature to such effect that to read him was like treading familiar ground. There was no need to visit Eastern scenes on the back of a camel when one could read Tommy Moore in one's arm-chair. Even Vigne commended the accuracy of 'Lalla Rookh' and prophesied that a bust of the poet would be put up in the Isle of Chenars.

We visited the Isle of Chenars and found that one of the great trees had fallen, another was hollow like a cave, briars covered the *débris* of the old temple. Vigne's tablet had gone, even the clean-cut masonry coping, which stands out so clearly in his sketch, had mouldered away. No wonder the genius of the island rejected the bust of Moore.

We spent the last half of September in Srinagar, and most of it on the lake and in the gardens, which are all five

or six miles by water from the city. We lunched under the Chenars, and I would bathe afterwards from the shikara while Minerva read. We explored the Nagin Bagh, where the water is deeper and bluer than anywhere in the lake, under the feet of Hari Parbat; the Nasim, a spacious memorable grove worthy of the large mind of Akbar who planned it; the Chasma Shahi, watered by a bubbling spring on the hillside; the Peri Mahal, a ruined old monastery haunted by fairies, and the Nishat Bagh and Shalimar Bagh many times,— Imperial gardens in which I loafed imperially and Minerva tested all the moods of repose. Minerva thought the Shalimar Bagh more beautiful than the Nishat, until we visited the Nishat again and watched the sun set over the Dal. Far across the valley there was a storm in the Pir Pinjal. A heavy purple rim of cloud threw the light aslant across the lake: the glow crept up the terraces and bathed the old stone in a flood of light. The great wall of rock behind the chenars took on a shade between terra-cotta and mauve. We could not leave the place till dark.

V.

The mosquitoes died with September. It was now safe to turn *The Snark's* nose to the Woolar, whence they had routed her. Mustâq was still of our crew, hanging on, as we pretended to think, by a precarious tenure, though I knew Minerva could never bring herself to dismiss a hireling. She had seen him filling the butter-dish with his fingers. The bearer, a down-country man, who thought a half-bred Kashmiri betrayable, overheard the reproof, and brought a story that he stirred the soup with an old shoe. This may have been a malicious fiction. A new lap in his service was marked by his bringing his "chits" to Minerva's writing-table. He laid them before her with a deprecating finality, as one who would say he was sorry that error could enter into the mind of the sahib or the mem-sahib, yet, however much the malice of circumstance might conspire to belie him, here was the written word in the face of which his cleanliness, honesty, and efficiency could never afterwards be impugned. The insinuating stoop of the old humbug, as Minerva read the certificates and handed them to me, was enough in itself to save him. Subalterns on short leave had exercised their wit at his expense. "Mustâq means well." "Mustâq has been with me for three months. He is leaving on account of ill health — MY ill health." "Mustâq styles himself a cook. He DID me very well. I do not use the word in its literal sense. I lost weight at first on a contract. I then tried the *hissab* (daily account), and

the Ananias in him had full play. The husband of Sapphira was a bad second. Afterwards I joined *bundobust* with another sahib, and he wept bitterly when the commissariat was not entrusted to him. His distress was due to the apparent lack of faith on my part, and he was not comforted when I pointed out to him that he would have less work for the same pay, and that he would not be out of pocket as before. This, I think, shows zeal and energy on his part, which will no doubt commend him to visitors to this Happy Valley as likely to prove an excellent servant. He is of the manjhi stock, and possesses all the useful traits which make his class prosperous." Weakly we decided to keep Mustâq on until we were back in Srinagar.

The Woolar cannot vie with the Dal in autumn, but in some ways Manasbal is more beautiful than either. If the word "romantic" still means anything, it describes the view across the lake from the north side. The garden on the west bank is now nothing more than an orchard and a village green. The tall poplars and the old ruined bastion jutting out into the blue water give it a southern Italian air. The wych elms, and the fruit trees, plum and cherry, splashed with blood and gold; the balconied houses, their roofs supported on piles of brick, leaving the granary open, with the great earthen vessels, like wine-jars, exposed to the four winds of heaven; the vines and pumpkins growing up to the door, the strings of red chillies hanging from the eaves, made us think of an old Greek pastoral. Only the herdsmen are vacant and sad. They do not sing at their work of Demeter and the threshing-floor, or of the shadowy plane-tree, or of the golden flower of the ivy, or of honey and the lips and hair of maidens.

What puts one most in sympathy with the villagers is that every graveyard is a bed of irises. In the evening, coming back from Manasbal, we met a funeral. It was one of those fresh soft evenings when one is conscious of the air as of a gift. One is a guest of Le Grand Seigneur, and wonders why one has not remembered it always. Flocks look warm and peaceful. Birds accept one naturally as they might a reed or a tree. The foal turns from his grass and trots confidently to his stall. One's relations with everything are quickened. There is a new significance in earth and cloud. We do not need "the little more" to stir us—the iris that has chosen to flower a second time, the kingfisher that will not budge as we pass by, the poplar that has put on a lemon robe before the season. Ordinary things affect us in a new way. We see two mongooses in a reed-bed, nose to nose, intent on something hidden, and we think of the dry warmth of their coats as if we felt it under the hand, and at the same time feel the coolth of the water about the cattle's

legs as if we were wading out with them into the stream; and we want to sit in a hollow tree because it is hollow, or under a sound one because it is sound. We stood on the wooden bridge at Sumbal and watched *The Snark* pass under. It was not an ordinary houseboat, but a friendly monster with a snout and tail, its wooden tiles like scales, making it appear a kindly dragon full of gifts. Religion must be the state of mind in which we always feel these kindlier and more intimate relations with things, —no evening's mood bred of soft air and changing lights, but a faith deep as life in the eternal giving and receiving. We ought not to have been so depressed by a funeral, but the sight of the little procession coming over the bridge made us infinitely sad. The mourners were so few and their gait so perfunctory. Only one wept.

They bore a long wooden box with a double folding lid like a flour-bin, with short legs to rest on. It was a bier, not a coffin. The body would be left in the hole under the irises, and the box would be carried home. The corpse was light: it must have been a woman or a child or a shrunken old man. The simplicity of the rite left a feeling of unmixed sadness, which the freshness of the air and the softness of the cloud increased. A bourgeois funeral is depressing and dismal; one is not so sad, because one is repelled by it. But the nakedness of this imparted one of those rare desolating glimpses into the proportion of things. We could not go back after seeing this piece of clay despatched to its hole in the iris bed and dismiss a servant. Mustâq was safe. It even lent a spurious and illogical dignity to the man.

But I doubt if Minerva would ever have passed sentence. I remember there had been one Ibrahim, whose good intentions so far exceeded his achievement that she could not say in cold blood, "You must go." She could not endure the thought of seeing the small of his back disappear down the drive for the last time. When he had ministered to us for three years we were transferred. It was a longed-for migration; but Minerva's first remark when she heard the marching-orders was, "We can leave Ibrahim behind."

VI.

From the Woolar we returned to Srinagar, and thence up to Islamabad in the eastern end of the valley, where the Jhelum ceases to be navigable only a few miles from the springs from which it rises. Here we were two days from the Banihal Pass, which was to be my route into the Punjab through Jammu. Minerva had three more weeks

in the valley. *The Snark* made the voyage from Srinagar to Islamabad, fifty-four miles, in three and a half days. We moored the first night at Pampoor, a village famous for its bread and its saffron. Of the bread I have no happy memories. We laid in three and a half dozen cakes. I would have no time for bread-making on the road. Mustâq was to stay with Minerva. She had subdued him with a touch more effective than the uses of adversity. Pampoor bread, we thought, is good tackle; but though hard and crisp, it can become as stale as other bread, and it is associated in my mind with a purgatorial march which I think of now as the "after-Snark."

At Avantipur we nearly ran into the arms of the most adhesive bore in Asia. There is an old Kashmir temple here of 800 A.D. We were on the point of landing to see it when Minerva touched me on the arm, and we saw a stiff erect figure emerge resolutely from a shikara and disappear above the bank in the direction of the ruins. The temple retained him till dusk. We did not see it. Rasula was quite injured when we would not visit it. "All sahibs see the temple—it is a very good temple. All sahibs see it," he reiterated. But we were firm, and clung to *The Snark*, which seemed all the more snug and comfortable for the peril outside. We drew the curtains and lit the fire, and Minerva said, "It is so nice not having to be near him, that it almost makes up for his being in the world."

At Islamabad we had our fill of sight-seeing. All the lions are gathered at this end of the valley. Martand, the temple of the sun, more than made up for the loss of Avantipur. The ruins should be seen in the early morning or at sunset in spring or in late autumn. They are of a bluish-grey stone with a tinge of pink or mauve in it, which is subtly responsive to changing light and shade. We entered the old temple just as the sun was setting. It stands on a *karewa*, a broad flat ridge between two valleys, on either side of which a river appears and disappears among villages in poplar clumps and groves of walnut and willow. We watched the sunset from inside, through the massive portico of the cella. In the foreground stands the lonely arch of what used to be the outer chapel, supporting its massive architrave. Through this we looked down on a highly irrigated plateau, where the fields of purple amaranth and the green and chocolate-coloured rice crops, mingled in an intricate design, stretch away to the yellow hills above Islamabad.

Vigne compares Martand with Persepolis and Palmyra. Though inferior in magnificence and extent, it deserves, he thought, to be ranked with these isolated ruins on account of its solitary and massive grandeur, and in situation it is far superior to either. "It is built," he writes, "on a

natural plateau at the foot of some of the noblest mountains in the world, and beneath its ken lies what is undoubtedly the finest and most *prononcée* valley in the world." We probably saw it for the last time unspoilt. Rails and barbed wire were lying on the grass, and there was a heap of ugly palings. Holes had already been dug in the earth to complete the sacrilege. Bawan, the sacred spring in the Lida valley below Martand, is spoilt by man. We did not linger there. A wooden finger-post pointing to the shrine from the road, with a touting inscription on it and the name of the priest in English, prepared us for the worst. Every lion in Kashmir has its obsequious attendant. Half a mile down the road, by the rock-cave of Bomtsu, is another notice-board in English, directing you to "ancient temple in cave of over 5000 years," and an "English-speaking priest" who sits at the seat of custom. We did not enter. It would be pleasant to drop upon such a shrine in a retired forest nook, and press one's small offering upon a deprecating man of God; but to be mulcted thus vulgarly, to become a kind of public lucky-bag in which any tout may dip, is enough to destroy one's generous impulse at the root. At Martand there is but one old man who will leave you, a little reproachfully, for eight annas. At Bawan we were pestered by touts. A priest followed us about with a book in his hand, in which visitors had testified how civilly he fed the fish. Spiritual robbers with the triple brand of Siva on their foreheads pressed round us, much too close to Minerva, crying out for *bakshish*. The grain-sellers badgered us to buy their grain and *chapatties*. When we bought it and threw it to the holy carp, the surface of the spring became a wriggling mass of backs and fins and scales. From the fish I turned to the horde of mendicants, and threw two small pieces of silver in the air, and as they sprawled and scrambled and wrestled on one another's backs I said to Minerva, "*Machlika-mafik*,"—"Like the fish." At which some of them had the grace to smile and look ashamed.

These lion parasites will be found wherever there are lions, and there is no getting away from them, from Baalbec to Angkor or Birs Nimrud. It is the tout that has earned the Kashmiri his bad name. Of the upper classes I know nothing, and I have always had a liking for the villagers, whom I have found hardy, kindly, humorous, and sufficiently honest. I know of many who have proved their courage. But man's devolution is in proportion to his temptation. The tourist industry is not good for man or beast; it has demoralised many a happy independent race. The Kashmiri specimen is a type that must evolve when a people who have been looted always find themselves at

last by a turn of the wheel in a position to loot without the exercise of any manly quality.

The people of the valley have been rough-ridden for centuries. Still one cannot always live in a state of making allowances, and the "townee" of Srinagar or the Pandit of Bawan will probably exhaust any tolerance the traveller has left. I did not mean to say a word against the folk of the country. The cairn of abuse is high enough, I thought. I will not throw another stone. If I have heaved my half-brick with the others, I have aimed it only at the begging priest, the parasite, and tout.

The next day we jolted down grass lanes, between willows and English marsh-flowers, to Achibal, another pleasaunce of Jehangir and Nur Mahal. It has the same conduits and chenars and fruit-trees and picturesque old "Baradari" of carved cedar wood and lattice work perched over a reservoir of clear water. The fountain gushes out of a rock in the hillside beneath larch and fir and deodar. The leaves were already falling, the pears and quinces touched with gold, the cherry a splash of crimson. In its yellow autumn robes this little garden seemed more lovely than the Shalimar or Nishat or any other garden in Kashmir, but as the beauty of the valley increased every day with the change in the leaf and the new girdle of snow on the mountains, we were never faithful in our attachment to any one.

VII.

One afternoon—it was the day I had to leave the boat—Minerva was lying on the sofa with 'Thais' in her hand watching the kettle boil for our last tea. We were talking of light things, when I saw a spider emerge on the cushion behind her, in leg-circumference as large as an afternoon tea-saucer. Minerva's perfect calm, her unconsciousness of what the Parcae were preparing, was beyond anything in Æschylus or Euripides. She looked up and saw the dramatic irony of it in my face.

"What is it?" she said with a little gasp, raising herself on one elbow.

The spider moved. I sprang at it and crushed it—lightly and not squashingly—with a roll of manuscript in my hand. Its fiery particle was snuffed out by an article. I ran aft with the *débris* and spilt it in the water. I know how Minerva's eyes followed me with incredulous wonder. She cannot accustom herself to the thought of a frontal attack on a spider; she would never be privy to such a revolting holocaust; but the unfair part of it is that I, her knight and protector, lose caste by them. If these rapid dramas could be enacted deliberately and in cold blood, she would rather

leave the enemy in possession and change her boat.

I jumped ashore and climbed the bank and called out a farewell to her, feeling that the breathlessness of the moment would make the getting off easier. My kit had gone on hours before. But she called me back.

"There are always two," she said darkly.

It was very late that night, after ten I think, when I reached my camp at Vernag. My bearer had limped in only just before me. He had not pitched my tent and I had to put up in a filthy hovel, a disused rest-house of sorts. I washed my face and hands in the sacred tank; the fish who swim towards a shadow thought I was food. I dined disagreeably; the bearer had brought the Pampoor bread which I had once unwisely commended. And in bed there was no sleep. The little enemy held manœuvres in five divisions on my body all night. Two native gentlemen who slept in the next room, separated from mine by a thin partition, snored as if they would wake Beelzebub. I had time to think, and my thoughts turned to the smoothness of life on *The Snark*.

"Minerva knows how to travel"—an interval of self-defence. . . . "What Minerva does not know about travel is not worth knowing. . . ." Another struggle. I would have burnt all the manuscripts of Keats for a tin of Keating. . . . "And I imagined that I was initiating her. . . ." I lighted matches. "If I make a double march to-morrow I might pull up *The Snark* at Avantipur. . . ."

It was only pride the next morning that kept my face towards the pass.

SOME PERSIAN PLAYS.

To be honest we must confess that our title is something of a misnomer. The plays were originally composed by Mirza Fath Ali, a Turk of Azerbaiján, in his native dialect, and the Persian, for all its raciness of idiom, is only a translation, the work of Mirza Jafar of Karágha Dágh in the same province of Azerbaiján. Anything in the nature of a stage play, other than the "tazyas" or miracle-plays, beloved of all Shias, wherein year by year are set forth the exploits and harrowing deaths of the martyrs Hassan and Hussain, the grandsons of the Prophet, is so contrary to the whole spirit of Islám, that it may be of some interest to see how these came to be written, what their author and the Persian translator have to say about them, and what the plays are like. But before doing so we must acknowledge our obligations, first to Messrs Haggard and Le Strange,[1] who have prepared an admirable edition and English translation of one play, "The Vizier of Lankurán," and second to M.M. Barbier de Meynard and Guyard,[2] to whose joint labours is due a similar edition of three more plays by the same hand, to which, however, for the moral benefit of students, they purposely refrained from appending a translation.

Mirza Fath Ali was born at Derbend in the early part of the nineteenth century. His father was either a village headman or a village mulla. For the Mirza was accustomed to subscribe himself "Akhundzáda," a title reserved for persons so descended. Anyhow, he must have received a fairly good education; for, having taken service in the Russian Army of the Caucasus, he speedily distinguished himself and rose to the rank of "Capoudan." It was while he was in the Russian service that he made the acquaintance of Mirza Jafar, then in exile from his country, to whom his official position enabled him to be of some assistance, which the latter afterwards requited by translating his plays into Persian. Mirza Fath Ali was a great admirer of European ideas and customs, especially of the drama, to which he chiefly attributed the intellectual superiority of the West. In 1850 General Waransoff, the Russian Governor of the Caucasus, caused a theatre to be built at Tiflis for the representation of the masterpieces

[1] "The Vazir of Lankurán," text, translation, and vocabulary, by W. H. D. Haggard and G. Le Strange. Trübner & Co., London, 1882.

[2] Trois Comédies traduites du dialecte Turc-Azeri en Persan par Mirza Djutar et publicés . . . avec un glossaire et des notes par C. Barbier de Meynard et S. Guyard. Paris, L'Imprimerie Nationale, 1886.

of the French stage. This event so excited the honest captain that he forthwith set to work and composed six plays and an historical dialogue. To these he attached a long introduction, and forthwith gave them to the world. His book was speedily translated into Persian by Mirza Jafar, who added to the introduction some original reflections of his own. It does not appear that any of the plays have ever been acted either in Turkish or in Persian. But they have found a certain number of readers, especially in Persia. Indeed the translation has come near to overshadowing the original, partly no doubt by reason of its own merits, which are great, partly because of the superiority of Persian as a vehicle of expression over an obscure dialect of Turkish. Messrs Haggard and Le Strange record that they were unable to obtain a copy of the original in Teheran. But the two French scholars were more fortunate, and a few pages of the Turkish text may be found in their edition, placed there partly as a linguistic curiosity, partly to enable the learned to estimate the merits of the Persian translation.

Mirza Jafar's life-history is also not without interest. His youth coincided with a period of great religious unrest in Persia, which culminated in the "episode of the Báb." The boldness of Mirza Jafar's views brought him into contact with the forces of orthodoxy, and he seems to have suffered some degree of persecution at the hands of the "Mujtahids." He left his native place and came to Tiflis, apparently under the pretext of having undertaken the pilgrimage to Mecca. Whether he really ever meant to give this proof of surrender to orthodoxy or not is not clear. But at Tiflis he fell in with a company of mystics, whose philosophical conversation soon stripped him of the last remainder of his religious beliefs, and he abandoned all further thought of his pilgrimage. Fearing to return home, he settled down in Tiflis, where the influence of his friend and compatriot secured for him a small administrative post under the Russian Government. He died at Tiflis in 1883.

The first part of the introduction is Mirza Jafar's own contribution. It begins with a sort of dedication to the Shah, and goes on with a little story, of which the moral is that the reader should read the book with close attention in order to derive as much benefit from it as possible. The translator then deplores the absence of all dramatic compositions from Persian literature, points out that he is remedying this deficiency, shows how he came to do so, and expresses the hope that his name will thus go down to posterity. His writings, he says, at least cannot fail to be of great use to school teachers, as being eminently suited for "reading without tears," and are also confidently recommended to foreigners studying the Persian language, in place of the ex-

tracts from the Gospels which have hitherto been in general use as text-books. He then proceeds to defend himself for his free use of colloquial language, and begs of the reader the favour that his pieces, being dramatic works, may be read dramatically, with the proper expression and emphasis, "the utterances of old men, Armenians and Feringhis, for example, being given in the hesitating manner characteristic of such folk." For the rest each must follow his own taste.

This brings us to the point where the author's own introduction begins. It consists of general observations on the dramatic art and a citation of the advantages, moral and literary, to be derived from its cultivation. Incidentally, certain directions are given with regard to speaking and gesture on the stage; and the circumstances are described which led the writer to aspire to the proud position of being the first Moslem dramatist. Finally, the criticism of the public is good-humouredly invited.

But before we proceed to pass judgment, we must sample our worthy playwright's wares. We must not expect too much. Pallas Athene may have sprung into life full-grown and fully armed, but among mortals the works which she inspires take time, and literary exotics are usually plants of slow growth. Nevertheless MM. de Meynard and Guyard have found some merit in these "tentatives peut-être sans lendemain," and assign to our author "malgré toutes ses maladresses d'agencement, ses inexpériences d'auteur novice," "de la finesse, de la gaieté, un certain talent d'observation, en un mot, l'instinct des choses du théâtre." Let us hope that the readers of 'Maga' will find themselves able to repeat this kindly criticism in case the old Mirza, wherever he may be, still takes an interest in the children of his brain and still feels a deference for the opinions of Feringhis.

The edition of the French scholars contains three plays, "L'Ours Gendarme," "Les Avocats," and "L'Alchimiste." The two last-named titles offer no difficulty, but for the first neither the French nor any English equivalent that I can suggest is very satisfactory. The Turkish title—no Persian translation has been attempted—is "Khirs Qúldúr Básán," or "The Robber-Frightening Bear," which gives some notion of the nature of the play. Its humour is frankly farcical, but not ineffective. It is presented in four acts, of which the first, containing two scenes, is disproportionately long. The curtain rises upon a village of the Shams-ud-dín tribe, which stands in the middle of a green valley. The foreground is canopied by a tall tree, an oak or chestnut. Bairám, the hero of the play, is discovered busily engaged in stowing away certain saddles and other gear. Parizád, his beloved, is seated on a stone near at hand under the shade of the tree. Parizád's own

father is dead, and she is the ward of her uncle, Meshedi Qurbán, who proposes to give her in marriage to his own son Tárwardi.

When Bairám has finished his work, he comes over to Parizád and they begin to talk. After a few sentences—

"*Parizád.* What can I do? How can I help it? My father is dead. My mother and I are in my uncle's power. I have no brother and no one to help me. My uncle will not consent to give me to any other man. He does not want the property which my father left to pass away from him.

Bairám. Then it seems your uncle does not want *you*. It is the property he wants. And so he consents to give you to that brain-sick fool, who has never shot a sparrow in his life nor stolen so much as a lamb.

Parizád. What can I do? Mayhap it is written on my forehead that I must be a Tájik's[1] wife, and who can go beyond the writing on his forehead?

Bairám. But what do *you* want? Would it not be better for you to hang yourself than to become the wife of that Tájik?

Parizád. Certainly death is a hundred times better than to be Tárwardi's wife. Give me the chance, and I would not remain alive one single day to endure that misery.

Bairám. God forbid! The words came and I spoke them. After you were dead, why should I drag out my life in the world? I don't want you to die, and I don't want to see you Tárwardi's wife. That very day I would put a bullet into his ribs, and then let come what come may.

Parizád. Then find a bullet for me too and kill me also. After you are dead, why should I go on living in the world?"

The young people go on conversing in this exalted strain. Bairám suggests that they should elope. Parizád refuses, because she cannot bear to darken her mother's days, and because her uncle's wealth and influence would make life together impossible for them. Bairám half-heartedly proposes that he should kill his rival. But to this Parizád will not consent, and Bairám dismisses the notion as impracticable. Then he thinks of a plan which offers better promise of success, and bids Parizád go and find Zuleikha, the wife of Namáz, and send her to him. Follows a pretty parting in which Bairám begs "just one little kiss," and, Parizád consenting, helps himself to a good many more, after the manner of lovers. Parizád departs, and Bairám indulges in a soliloquy in which he deplores Parizád's foolish scruples in the matter of homicide. Enter Zuleikha, to whom he explains the situation and enlists her sympathy. Zuleikha explains that she is in Parizád's confidence, that the girl loves Bairám and Bairám only, that of Tárwardi she thinks no more "than of a mosquito," and will never consent to be given in marriage to him. Bairám bitterly replies that a girl's consent is of small consequence. She may cry for a few days; then she will resign herself to the inevitable, while he will be left in grief and woe. Together they then concoct a scheme. Tárwardi, who is intimate with Namáz, Zuleikha's husband, is to be told

[1] "Tájik" means a man of settled or sedentary life.

that Parizád despises him as a coward because of his regrettable lack of enterprise in highway robbery and such-like exploits; and he is to be fired with the idea of taking the road in the hope that his bungling attempts at crime may bring him to grief. Bairám promises his Kurdish horse to Zuleikha's husband, and a cow with its calf to Zuleikha herself, in return for their assistance in the gulling of Tárwardi, and bestows on her a silk handkerchief filled with raisins on account.

The second scene takes place inside the house of Namáz and Zuleikha. Tárwardi comes in to dinner, and is duly made the victim of Bairám's plot. This is mainly the work of Zuleikha, who plays her fish very cleverly, and answers with pretended reluctance the questions which her hints incite Tárwardi to put. Namáz plays second fiddle very contentedly, and those who believe all that they are told about the subjection of women in the East might take some advantage from reading the scene. But it is too long to quote in full. Tárwardi is fooled to the top of his bent, and reminded how he is the grandson of "Amír Aslán the Bear-Slayer." Before his resolution has had time to cool, Zuleikha goes off to call a couple of neighbours who have had some experience in the game at which Tárwardi is now about to try his hand. In her absence Namáz, by a little adroit flattery, extracts from Tárwardi a promise that he will give him the half of his share of the spoil. Zuleikha returns with two loutish youths named Wali and Urúj, who speak with a villainous accent. Namáz informs them that Tárwardi is going for a "gardish," and wants to take them with him. "Gardish," like most Persian words, has a score of meanings, but in this connection it can best be rendered by "expedition," or the French "promenade," in which sense it is an accepted euphemism for a raid. Wali and Urúj at first affect not to understand this, and, after the manner of Orientals, assume a bluff simplicity well becoming to very virtuous shepherds. Namáz, however, plays upon their cupidity and desire for fame, and rapidly overcomes their scruples, real or feigned. They agree to go, and depart to get ready. A delightful little scene follows between Tárwardi and Namáz. Tárwardi is unwilling to leave home without his father's blessing.

"*Tárwardi.* Oh, Namáz, there's one thing we quite forgot. My father is a Meshedi.[1] Do you think he will consent to let me go robbing on the highway?

Namáz. Go and ask him.

Tárwardi. That seems strange advice. I am to go to my father and say, 'Give me leave to go and commit highway robbery.'

Namáz. Why should you say that? Say 'I am going into the country to

[1] *I.e.*, one who has made the pilgrimage to Meshed, the holy city of the Shias.

get grain.' He will give you leave fast enough. Then take the road, the main high-road. There is nothing like it.

Tárwardi. What do you mean—— 'there is nothing like it'?

Namáz. I mean, what is so easy?

Tárwardi. You have queer notions of what is easy. God's truth! I am so afraid of my father it makes the job very difficult for me.

Namáz. A man who is afraid always makes excuses. You won't go. You know that yourself. (Enter Zuleikha.) Zuleikha, go and tell those lads not to trouble any further. Tárwardi's jibbing.

Tárwardi. Me? Jibbing? Not I.

Zuleikha. I have just seen Parizád. I whispered how matters stand in her ear. I can't tell you how delighted she was. She said, 'Thank God! Now they won't say any more that Tárwardi's afraid. After this I shan't be ashamed to call him my lover. Until this day all the girls have mocked at me. Every one I saw, I used to hang my head in shame.'"

Namáz plays up to this lead, and the worthy couple proceed to fit Tárwardi out with Namáz' sword and gun and pistol, which, with the dagger that he already has, they think will be a sufficient armament. Wali and Urúj come in ready equipped and the three set forth together, amidst invocations of good luck from Namáz and loud boasting on the part of Tárwardi. Namáz discloses to his wife the agreement which Tárwardi has made with him about the division of the spoil. She upbraids his "crooked bargain" bitterly, on the ground that it will have a damping effect on Tárwardi's courage. "Oh, well," says Namáz, "one never knows. They may have good luck. A coward can always find a greater coward than himself. After all, whatever happens, we are all right. A horse from one side and cash from the other!" He is left rubbing his hands as the curtain falls.

The next scene (Act II.) shows us another part of the valley with rocky hills in the background. Bairám appears, armed and alone. He indulges in an eloquent speech, with much adjuration of the Deity. He is interrupted by the sound of footsteps and slinks off, "Joseph fashion."[1] Tárwardi and his two companions come on, Tárwardi in a great state of nervous excitement. They think they hear the noise of horses' hoofs and exchange hurried whispers. Tárwardi's heart begins to fail him. He says—

"'I can't spill the blood of poor helpless defenceless wretches. I cannot do such a wicked act. Pity and gentleness are good qualities in a man. I can't do it, and that is the truth. I will turn round and go home.'

'Oho,' sneers Wali, 'you have thought of that a bit too late. By God, if you stir a foot, I will empty this gun into your belly. Fool! Madman! You brought us here by prayers and supplications, and now do you mean to go off and leave us?'"

A fierce discussion ensues, in the course of which Tárwardi delivers himself of the admirable sentiment, quoted from the maxims of a legendary hero named Kúrúghli, that "real courage consists of ten parts — nine parts running

[1] An allusion to a disreputable story in the Koran. Cf. also Genesis, ch. xxxix.

away and one part not being seen." But his followers, who mean business, have had enough of him, and all the maxims of Kúrúghli would not suffice to restore him to the place in their esteem which he has forfeited. Seeing something approach along the road, they contemptuously bid him stay where he is while they go forward to investigate. Tárwardi, left alone, begins to philosophise on the evil consequences of attempting to win the heart of a young woman, but for which, he says, "he never would have thought to see himself letting fire and sword loose upon the world!" While he is still meditating there wanders on to the stage a wayfaring German, the proprietor of a travelling circus, to whom the euphonious name of Fook has been given. Herr Fook congratulates himself on the good sense which led him to alight from his carriage and walk a little way and gather the beautiful flowers of which he will be able to make a nosegay for his sweetheart, Maria Adamovna. While he is still talking to himself he catches sight of Tárwardi and falls into a terrible panic. There are no stage directions at this point — in fact there seems to be a lacuna in the text—and it is a little hard to make out what happens. It seems that, after Wali and Urúj go off, Tárwardi conceals himself amongst the rocky hills in a place where he can see what they are doing. His attention is fixed upon them, and he does not notice the entrance of Herr Fook. He is evidently puzzled by what he sees in the distance—

"'I do not understand what they are doing,' he says. 'They have turned the carriage horses loose and the driver has run off into the forest. Bravo! Bravo! My lion! [*Patting his chest.*] What deeds we have done! [*He looks round and sees Fook.*] Oh! Ah! O Lord! I am bewitched! Look! What can it be?'"

A farcical scene ensues, after the Gadshill pattern. Presently—

"*Tárwardi.* But aren't you a robber?

Fook. No, I am a poor German. Who are you?

Tárwardi. Who am I? Dog, can't you see that I am a highwayman? Two hundred of my companions are hiding in yonder forest. How many are you?

Fook. I'm alone—just one man."

Tárwardi takes advantage of the situation. Herr Fook breaks into tears, and calls upon the name of his beloved. Tárwardi threatens that his two hundred comrades are upon the point of returning, and bids Fook flee "to any hell he pleases." No sooner is the German gone than Tárwardi begins his boasting again and wishing that Parizád could have seen him just now, "so that her liver might have been turned to water from fright." While he is still talking Wali and Urúj come on. They have captured and reharnessed one horse and are leading a carriage containing two very large chests.

"*Tárwardi.* Have they all run away?

Wali. Make your mind easy. They are all gone.

Tárwardi. Cowards! To think that there should be such men in the world! What have you got in the carriage? what is our spoil?"

Wali bids him open the chests and sort the contents while he and Urúj go and look for the other horses. Tárwardi urges them to make haste lest he should be surprised while at his task and should shed innocent blood. Wali replies contemptuously, and the two go off. Tárwardi sets to work on the chests, hugging himself with glee at their size and weight. He pictures them as filled with "táfta" (taffeta), and declares that Parizád shall wear chemises made of that material for the rest of her life. Namáz may whistle for his promised half-share. What has he done to deserve it? Still talking, he approaches one of the boxes and opens it. Out springs a monkey. He advances to catch it, "as a present for Parizád," but the monkey jumps up a tree. Tárwardi curses his luck for a while at chancing upon such strange merchandise, and then advances to open the other chest. No sooner has he opened it than out comes a bear, which attacks him savagely. He calls loudly for help, shouts, screams, and protests his repentance. The bear knocks him down, and is about to make an end of him when Bairám appears, levels his gun at the bear, and fires. But fear of hurting the prostrate man affects his aim. He does no more than wound the animal, which, however, leaves Tárwardi, charges Bairám, and disappears into the jungle. Tárwardi, finding himself unhurt, jumps up and dashes away. Bairám comes forward, examines the carriage and the chests, looks for traces of blood from the bear, and is still standing with his discharged gun in his hand wondering what on earth can have happened (for he has not recognised Tárwardi), when a Russian Superintendent of Police with an interpreter and a troop of Cossacks marches on. Bairám is at once arrested in spite of his protestations of innocence. Our good friend, the Mirza, must have taken part in many such scenes, and in the dialogue which follows it is not difficult to see where his sympathies lie. There is a strange *esprit de corps* which links all police officers together with the most potent ties, and the ex-"Capoudan" is all on the side of law and order. I am sure that for many of 'Maga's' readers, who may happen to have served the Indian Government, the Russian Superintendent's opening speech will strike a very vibrant chord of memory.

"'Not guilty,' he says, 'how can you be not guilty? Is there no guilt in breaking open boxes, rifling carriages, and using firearms? Oh, it is no use showing fight. You cannot get the better of the Imperial forces. Although you have not much sense, you must admit that you owe the Russian Empire thanks for saving you from the Lesghians and the Kapchaks,[1] and you ought to be good

[1] Tribes of the Caucasus.

subjects, though you don't understand what is meant by law and order. But what is the good of talking to you like this? Where are your comrades?'"

Bairám, of course, continues to protest his innocence, and the Police Superintendent naturally refuses to believe a word of what he says. But it is easy to see throughout the scene between them that each man's respect for the other rapidly increases, and here again some among us will recall that the touch is true to nature. Finally, being able to get nothing out of his prisoner, the Superintendent, followed by his Cossacks, rides off, grumbling over the laborious nature of his duties. As the curtain falls the monkey comes leaping and dancing down from his tree and makes off.

Four days elapse between the second and third acts. The third act takes us back to the Shams-ud-dín village. All the village notables are seated in a circle, amongst them Tárwardi, with his head bandaged, where the bear had clawed him, and Meshedi Qurbán, his father. Tárwardi is asked to explain what happened. He tells his audience how he and his two companions were going to get grain, when in "Peacock Valley" they met a laden equipage. Wali and Urúj (of course they had nothing to do with it!) said they would play a trick upon the people in the carriage. They fired their guns off in the air. The horses broke loose from the carriage and bolted. The people fled. Wali and Urúj went after the horses, while he proceeded to examine the contents of the carriage. A monkey jumped out of one chest and a bear out of the other, which nearly killed him. Suddenly he heard a shot, and the bear made off. He sprang to his feet and fled. Since then he has seen nothing of the carriage or the horses, and he does not know what to make of it. The village elders discuss the case, and come to the conclusion that as the young men set out on a Wednesday, and Peacock Valley is known to be a place of evil reputation, they must have stumbled on a devils' meeting, and what happened was the work of "Jinns." While they are still talking, the Police Superintendent is sighted in the distance, and one shrewd fellow bids Tárwardi make himself scarce, lest his bandaged head should attract attention. The police officer and his interpreter come in, and, with a certain amount of comic business which those who have ever been in that harassed official's place will appreciate, the villagers are made to stand in a row and one among them is selected as spokesman. An amusing scene follows. The Diwán Begi (Police Superintendent) has received full details of the robbery from Herr Fook, who complains of the loss of a valuable ape from Brazil and of a bear from the "Yangi Dunya" (the New World, America), besides other animals. Information has also been re-

ceived that on the day of the crime three armed men were seen riding back to the village. This is explained to the villagers, and they are called upon to produce the guilty persons. Nahf, the appointed spokesman—it so happens that he is the same person who warned Tárwardi to clear out when the advent of the Diwán Begi was announced,—promises to tell the whole truth, and expose the falsehood of the tales which the enemies of the village have been bearing against it.

"'Some of our young men,' he says, 'went into the country on Wednesday to get grain. They fell in with a devils' meeting. The devils were joy-riding in a carriage. The silly boys fired a gun towards the carriage to frighten the Jinns and make them run away. They ought to have said "Bismillah,"[1] but omitted to do so. The Jinns were enraged, and, since they have power to assume any shape, fell upon them in the form of a bear and bit them severely. Now our enemies have concocted a lying tale, and set you off on a false scent. Pook, you know, is the name of the chief of the Jinns.'

Diwán Begi [*very angry—speaking in Russian*]. Talk sense, man. Every thing that is round is not a hazel-nut.[2]

Nahf [*to the interpreter*]. Sir, I do not understand what the gentleman says.

Interpreter [*who also has not understood*]. He asks whether you have plenty of hazel-nuts and walnuts here.

Nahf. May I be your sacrifice! Please tell him that this valley is known as the Valley of Hazel-nuts. It is a regular mine of both hazel and walnuts. Please God, when they ripen we will bring him sacks and sacks full. We would do anything to please our Diwán Begi!"

The interpreter translates, and adds, on his own account, "and they will give you a guide."

"*Diwán Begi* [*furious*]. What is this nonsense, fellow? What should I do with their beastly nuts? I don't want their guide. I know the way we came here as well as you do, and have no need of a guide. [*To the villagers.*] Will you give up those robbers?

Nahf. What robbers, sir?

Diwán Begi. What robbers? I have been talking to you for the last hour, and then you say, 'What robbers?'

Nahf. But I explained to Your Excellency that our lads did not fire at anybody. They fell in with a devils' meeting.

Diwán Begi. What rubbish!

Nahf. Sir, Your Excellency is a man of experience and good sense. Has any one ever heard of a bear, an ape, and a hyena going joy-riding in a carriage from place to place?

Diwán Begi. Did I ever say they were joy-riding?

Nahf. Did you not, sir? Then what did Your Excellency say?"

So it goes on. The poor Diwán Begi is driven more and more frantic. He sends for the bear, which has been recaptured. He calls upon his troop to produce another interpreter who really understands Turkish, but gets no assistance. There was a man, they tell him, in the 21st Sotnia, who wanted to learn, but he is not present! No-

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[1] "In the Name of God." The pious Moslem is required to make this ejaculation on all sorts of occasions.

[2] A Russian proverb. Refers to the confusion between Fook the German and Pook the Jinn.

thing will break down the obstinacy of the villagers. They do not even know who were the young men who fell in with the devils' meeting. At last the Diwán Begi in despair sends again for Bairám, whom he believed to be innocent in spite of appearances, and presses him to reveal the names of the real culprits. Bairám stoutly refuses; but the Diwán Begi is so impressed by his demeanour that he goes off to fetch Herr Fook, leaving Bairám in the village on parole not to attempt escape. A single trooper, whose name is Karím, an old friend of Bairám's, is left in charge of him. Bairám asks Karím to go and tell his plight to Zuleikha. Karím, very much mystified, goes off to fetch her, remarking, "Well, he's a queer fellow; and if he should run off, why then he will be gone, that's all." Apparently the Diwán Begi is but a poor disciplinarian! While Karím is away Parizád comes in and has an affecting scene with Bairám, whom she implores to turn approver and save himself and her. Save her, he says, from what? Does he not know? she asks. Her uncle has put an end to her excuses and delays, and her wedding with Tárwardi is fixed for the very next day. At this news Bairám breaks into a fiery outburst, and while he is still declaiming, the villagers, who had all left the stage before the Diwán Begi went off, return in a body. Amongst them is Sona, Tárwardi's mother. She heaps reproaches on the girl for appearing unveiled before Bairám, who is henceforward to be treated as a stranger. Karím, who comes in while the old lady is working off some fine abuse, takes up the cudgels in reply. Tempers are lost on both sides, and there are all the makings of a pretty riot when the Diwán Begi returns with Herr Fook and a force of constables. Herr Fook speedily identifies Tárwardi, who tells one or two ridiculous falsehoods and then confesses, falling on his knees and promising amendment. He is arrested. The villagers attempt to rescue him, but are forestalled by the resolute action of the Diwán Begi. Bairám is told that he may go free. To the surprise of every one he makes answer that he is guilty, in that it was he who put Tárwardi up to making his first attempt at robbery. He then explains the whole situation, amid a torrent of "corroborative detail" from Tárwardi. The Diwán Begi severely rebukes Bairám, and then inquires privily of Parizád which of the two young men she wishes to marry. She replies that if they give her to Tárwardi she will kill herself. The Diwán Begi, using the "method of elimination," rightly concludes from this that she wishes to marry Bairám, and calls upon Meshedi Qurbán to give her to the man of her choice. Meshedi Qurbán agrees to do so if his son is pardoned. Herr Fook consents to compound the matter for a con-

sideration, paid in cash, which Meshedi Qurbán undertakes to pay. Every one is satisfied, and the curtain falls on a little sermon, delivered by the Diwán Begi, on the duty of loving, honouring, and obeying the benign Russian Government.

"Les Avocats" is certainly a much less childish production than the play which we have been considering. Some people may find it less amusing, possibly for that very reason. But it does not lack for merit. It has a well-constructed plot, and the dialogue and character drawing are distinctly clever. It deals with quite a different class of society from the rude bumpkins depicted in the first play, and, like the "Vizier of Lankurán," it shows no reserve in bringing on to the stage the private life of the *harem*. It is perhaps to the boldness of this attempt, violating as it does the first canons of oriental etiquette, that we may ascribe the unmerited neglect which has been the portion of these plays in their own country.

To reproduce the whole list of Dramatis Personæ would be tedious and unnecessary. There are twenty-eight characters in all, but though all have something to say, the action is really confined to about half a dozen persons. The scene is laid in Rasht, the chief Persian port on the shores of the Caspian. The time is the present, that is when the play was written, between fifty and sixty years ago. Six months before the play opens Háji Ghafúr, a wealthy merchant of Rasht, is supposed to have died suddenly during an epidemic of cholera. Foreseeing the possibility of his death, Háji Ghafúr had sent, on the outbreak of the disease, a strong-box containing sixty thousand tomans to the President of the Local Court for safe custody, with instructions that in the event of his death the money should be paid to his heir. So violent was the epidemic that Rasht was nearly deserted, almost the only people left being a company of soldiers, who were charged with the duty of guarding the empty houses and burying stray corpses. When he was taken ill, Háji Ghafúr sent for some of these soldiers, and in the presence of four of them solemnly declared that his sister was his sole heir, and called upon them, after his death, to see to the due burial of his body. So he "passed to the mercy of God."

The first scene is laid in Háji Ghafúr's house. His sister, an unmarried girl of about eighteen years of age, named Sakína, is discovered at the rise of the curtain. She sends for her maid, and tells her that in response to her request to the President of the Court for the money left with him by her brother, she has been informed that a claim to it has been entered by the wife of the late Háji Ghafúr, and her request cannot be granted until the case has been decided. This involves some explanation. The woman calling herself Háji Ghafúr's wife was in fact married to him, but only by

the form known as "muta'a."[1] There was no issue by this marriage, and the woman has no claim. Sakína further confides to her attendant that she wants the money in order to marry Azíz Beg, the man of her heart, whose suit her brother would never recognise—not from any personal objection, but only because Azíz Beg was descended "from the People of Oppression," and was himself "a Servant of the Gate."[2] She is on the point of sending the maid to summon Azíz Beg to discuss the situation when he himself comes in. It is at once apparent that he is in an exceedingly ill temper. Questioned by Sakína, he explains that he has heard a strange story which he would like her to contradict. Only yesterday Aga Hassan, a merchant of Rasht, caused some of the leading ladies of the place to call upon Sakína's aunt, an old lady named Zobeida, and ask on his behalf for Sakína's hand in marriage. The old lady at once consented and gave her promise. Sakína is naturally furious at hearing of her aunt's unwarranted presumption, and sends a message to desire the honour of Zobeida's presence. Upon her arrival Azíz Beg steps into an adjoining apartment and listens to the conversation. The two ladies greet one another in the most affectionate manner, but Sakína is too angry to be polite for long, and she calls roundly upon her relative for an account of her actions.

"*Zobeida.* For shame! For shame! What does it matter to you? You must have a husband, and whoever he is, you will have to go to him. It is not becoming for little girls to speak so before their elders and betters. Oh fie, I am ashamed of you!

Sakína. I *will* speak. I am my own mistress, and intend to remain so. Nobody can give me away against my will.

Zobeida. Of course they can't. But don't you want to marry?

Sakína. No, thank you. I do not want to marry.

Zobeida. There are many like you who say "No, thank you," and afterwards change their minds.

Sakína. Aunt, I swear I am not joking. It would be quite impossible for me and Aga Hassan to live together. Please get that notion right out of your head.

Zobeida. Out of the question, my dear niece. You will make all the most influential people in the province our enemies.

Sakína. To hell with their enmity. I can't bear the sight of Aga Hassan. If I see him, it stirs my bile.

Zobeida. Why?

Sakína. He is a dishonest villain.

Zobeida. Villain for others maybe, but very good for us. He is in the first rank of merchants; he is very rich; he knows how to make money. He is in with all the most important people in the province. Where will you get a better husband than that?

Sakína. If Aga Hassan were to cover me with jewels from head to

[1] A "muta'a" marriage is a temporary union for a specified period. There is some doubt whether Muhammed really sanctioned the custom or not, and the Sunnis do not practice it. Amongst the Shias it is a recognised institution, and the position of the woman is regarded as respectable. But a "muta'a" wife, left a widow during the period of the union, has not the same rights as an "aqdi," *i.e.*, one married by the "nikáh" ceremony "*in plenum jus.*"

[2] This only means that he was an official, probably a tax collector, and that his father had followed the same profession.

foot I would not marry him. Go and tell him to give up this idea.

Zobeida. How can I do such a thing? I can't. You can't get out of what I said. The man sent all the greatest ladies in the place to me. I am not a child. It seemed a good plan. I saw a great opportunity for you, so I gave my promise. And now you want to dishonour me before all those people. [*Begins to cry.*] I too have a name and fame of my own. I too have a reputation. I too in my day have been so-o-mebo-o-dy.[1]

Sakína. So to prevent any harm to your name and fame I am to have my whole life darkened. You take strange care of me, aunt! If the whole world has to go to rack and ruin I won't go to Aga Hassan, I won't go. I asked you to explain to him yourself and make him give up this notion. If you won't, I will send for him myself, and to his face I will put a thousand ill names and vile words upon him. I will treat him worse than a dog, and fling him into the street.

Zobeida [*tearing her cheeks with the nails of both hands*]. Oh! Oh! God! Oh! The times are topsy-turvy. These modern girls have not a particle of shame or modesty left in their faces. Sakína, I have never seen a girl so impudent as you. I was a girl once, and had elderly relatives. I never dared to lift my head in the presence of my elders and betters. It is due to the shamelessness of girls like you that our province is never free from plague and cholera.'

Sakína resents this introduction of Providence into her private affairs, and after a little more talk the old lady goes off in floods of tears. Sakína then sends for Aga Hassan. He comes without delay, an oily rogue. Sakína will have none of his flatteries, and lets him know quite plainly that she sees through his game. It is only her money that he is after, and he is not going to get it. His smooth speeches soon turn to threats, but Sakína is not frightened, and sends him off quite crestfallen. She then takes counsel with Azíz Beg as to the lawyer whom they shall employ. Azíz Beg, who throughout is quite dominated by his future helpmate, has no suggestions of any value to offer, except that he shall bring the matter to the ears of the prince who had a regard for his father, and has promised to assist himself if ever he should need it. Sakína agrees, but, insomuch as the prince cannot stop the impending litigation, urges that the selection of an advocate is a matter of more pressing importance. While they are still talking, a stranger is announced who desires to speak with the lady of the house. After a certain amount of conventional boggling over the propriety of admitting a strange man, an interview is arranged, Azíz Beg representing himself for the occasion as a near relative in whose presence Sakína may hear what the stranger has to say. She may not of course appear unveiled to him, and according to the strict rule ought not to address him directly. But this point is waived on the ground that Sakína is "so much more sensible than other girls." The stranger discloses himself as an old friend of the late Háji Ghafúr. He chanced just now to be at the house of Aga Mardán, the celebrated lawyer, who has been retained by the plaintiff in the case against

[1] Literally, "I too have an eyebrow; I too was a man!"

Sakína, when Aga Hassan came in, very angry, and demanded a private interview with Aga Mardán. He warns Sakína to be on the look-out for mischief. The girl in her simplicity thinking that, as she has a good case, she need have no fear, is inclined to make light of the matter. But the stranger warns her that Aga Mardán has the ear of the court, and any case in which he appears is already as good as won. The lovers ask his advice in the choice of counsel. The stranger after some demur suggests that they shall apply to Aga Salmán, who is the only man able to stand up for a moment against Aga Mardán. He then takes his departure amid profuse protestations of gratitude from Sakína and Azíz Beg. Aga Salmán is summoned, consents to undertake the case, though he is reluctant to accept a fee, and makes himself acquainted with the nature of the defence and with the names of the witnesses on whom it is intended to rely. After he has gone Azíz Beg takes his leave to go and inform the prince of what is happening. The curtain falls on the conclusion of the first act.

The second act passes in the house of Aga Mardán, counsel for the plaintiff. Aga Mardán is a sanctimonious scoundrel with piety for ever upon his lips, but his practice is of the shadiest. To him enters Aga Karím, who is no other than the mysterious stranger on whose advice Sakína had consented to employ Aga Salmán. He reports that their stratagem has succeeded to admiration, and Aga Salmán is at this moment closeted with Sakína Khánum. As soon as the interview with her is over, Aga Salmán will come at once to communicate with Aga Mardán, nominally his adversary, but really his confederate.

"*Aga Mardán.* Very good. Very good indeed. Egad, there must be magic in your tongue. Good. Tell me now, is the wife of Háji Ghafúr pretty?

Aga Karím. Why do you want to know?

Aga Mardán. Why? If she takes a fancy to me I will marry her. Can I not have another wife?

Aga Karím. How can I tell whether she will take a fancy to you or not? You are something past your prime, you know. She is quite a young woman.

Aga Mardán. Well, well, my friend, death awaits us all alike. I am not so much past my prime. I am just exactly fifty-one years old.

Aga Karím. I shouldn't have thought so. You must be seventy.

Aga Mardán. No, no. You know I was born the year after the great earthquake at Tabríz.

Aga Karím. But you have got a wife.

Aga Mardán. It is not because I have no wife that I mean to marry her. If, by the grace of God, I can get all that money for the poor little woman out of the clutches of Háji Ghafúr's sister, why shouldn't she go with the money? I can marry her and keep it. That will be best for you too. Do you see any advantage for yourself in any other course?

Aga Karím. Truly, in that case, ugly or pretty does not matter. Were she as hideous as a she-goblin, you had better marry her if she will have you. But she is not ugly. However, I do not think she will have anything to say to you.

Aga Mardán. What do you mean? Why not?

Aga Karím. You know as well as I do. You are not much to look at, you know."

Fired by the candour of this criticism Aga Mardán postures before a mirror, puts on a Cashmere coat and a superfine tunic, combs his beard, and explains that his teeth have fallen out through a flux and not through age. When he has finished, the door opens and Háji Ghafúr's relict, whose name is Zínab, with her brother, comes in. As soon as the visitors are seated, the lawyer explains, nominally to the brother, in accordance with etiquette, but really to Zínab, that she has really no claim at all, but if she will only do as he tells her, she will be able to win her case. His directions are very much to the point. First, he must have 500 tomans, on account, "for sundry expenditure." Second, Zínab must agree to give him 30,000 tomans, half the sum in suit, in the event of her winning her case. To this she naturally demurs. "Oh, mercy," she says, "why do you ask so much?" "It is not much at all," he replies; "you have absolutely no claim whatever to any share in the inheritance. Really it is I who am making you a present of 30,000 tomans!" Finally the brother accepts these preposterous terms, and Zínab gives a reluctant assent. Here the play is very true to life. The brother knows more or less what their position is. He is dishonest, greedy, and weak. Zínab has no thought of any such matters. She only knows that the law seems to bear very harshly upon her, and that while in Háji Ghafúr's lifetime she was mistress of his house and controlled his expenditure, and his sister had not authority "to the extent of a five-penny piece," now she must stand aside and see everything go to another woman. She is filled with an unreasoning feminine jealousy. It is more to prevent Sakína from getting the money than from covetousness that she has been led to make her claim. Still, having made the claim, she is not going to give up half the proceeds if she can help it.

The lawyer's third direction is more disinterested and amazingly dishonest. He tells her that she must appear in court with a baby seven months old, which he will provide, in fact has already provided, and swear that it is her child by the late Háji Ghafúr. This naturally raises a storm of protest. But the lawyer points out that while she, as a "muta'a" wife, has no claim, the child of such a union would be the legal heir. It will be very easy for him to get himself appointed guardian to the child, and five or six months later he will give out that it is dead. The whole inheritance will then pass to Zínab; she can keep half and give half to him—"wallahu khair ur-ráziqín" (and God is the best of nurturers). The quotation from the Koran goes a long way towards clinching the matter, and Zínab's fears and scruples are soon silenced. The baby is produced and made over to Zínab, so that she may get used to the idea that she is a mother. The 500 tomans,

for which Aga Mardán had asked on account, are paid over, and Zínab with her brother is on the point of departing, when a retainer of the prince comes in, closely followed by the servant of the Qázi (the president of the court). Each of these worthies has a message to deliver to Aga Mardán. The prince wishes to see him that evening on important business, and the Qázi requests the pleasure of his company to dinner. Aga Mardán returns suitable replies, and his clients go off much impressed.

"*Aga Karím.* I don't understand how the prince's head messenger and the Qázi's servant came to appear.

Aga Mardán. I thought the woman would object to my instructions. So I arranged matters beforehand, and gave each of them a shilling to come in while she was here and deliver those messages, so that she might see the terms of respect and intimacy on which the prince and the Qázi hold me, and so take heart. But I fear she will not be equal to taking the oath in court and we shall be undone."

Aga Karím undertakes to manage Zínab. The two villains then discuss the terms on which their false witnesses are to be engaged, and decide that they will give to the Superintendent of the bazaar 500 tomans — fifty in cash and the balance later, and to each of the witnesses, for whom they are going to indent upon him, thirty tomans, half paid down and half after performance of contract. Aga Karím is just about to go off when the other calls after him, "Hie, you there, stop! I have just thought of something. Don't forget it. Next time you see Háji Ghafúr's widow, tell her not to keep on calling me 'Father.' Confound you! You never think of anything! I do not care so much about being always addressed as 'Father' by ladies when they want to be polite. Why should they use that name?" Aga Karím reassures him, with veiled impertinence, and goes off, and the third confederate, Aga Salmán, comes in.

"*Aga Salmán.* Peace to you.

Aga Mardán. And to you peace. Tell me, what has passed?

Aga Salmán. They have appointed me their counsel. Now tell me, what do you intend?

Aga Mardán. I intend to get the witnesses ready and take them to court. How much did they promise you?

Aga Salmán. They promised me a fee of 500 tomans. They said, 'Our witnesses are ready, and our cause is just. There is nothing secret or underhand about it.' So I agreed.

Aga Mardán. You did well. Now do you see that a man does not get much out of supporting the right? I, on the other hand, got 30,000 tomans out of Háji Ghafúr's widow. Those 30,000 tomans will come to you and me and Aga Karím. Did you learn the names of their witnesses, and find out where they live?

Aga Salmán. Yes. They are four soldiers named Badal, Qahrmán, Ghafár, and Jabbár, and they live in the Warji Bazar.

Aga Mardán. I must send for them here and give them a hint to give evidence the opposite way. But you go to them first and tell them to speak the truth for the sake of justice. Soldiers are so poverty-stricken that they are like a gang of beggars. They will ask you, "Sir, what will you give us after our evidence?" Then you

say to them, 'My lads, it is not well to ask a reward in such a matter. Give your evidence to please God, and on the day of judgment it shall be well with you at the last.'

Aga Salmán. Very good."

Aga Salmán goes off to see the soldiers, and while Aga Mardán is indulging in a soliloquy in which the will of God and the advancement of his villainous schemes are strangely commingled, Aga Karím returns with the Bazar Superintendent. They bring with them a crew of blackguards, whose mode of livelihood and vile reputation put them completely in the Superintendent's power. These rogues are then elaborately instructed in the part which they will have to play. When they have learnt it Aga Mardán invokes the blessing of God upon them, proves to them that they are really doing a very virtuous act, and undertakes payment as arranged with Aga Karím. They are then dismissed and the soldiers come in. They are very politely treated, regaled with a sumptuous breakfast, their scruples are gradually worn down and their cupidity excited. They pretend to remember seeing the child when they were at Háji Ghafúr's deathbed.

"Honesty and truth," says Aga Mardán, "are never wasted! My children, will you give evidence in court exactly as you have given it to me just now and get your money?" One of the soldiers objects that they have promised Aga Salmán. Must they now go and tell him that they cannot give evidence for him? "There is no need to speak to him at all," replies the lawyer. "Let him take you to court and produce you as his witnesses. Then you get up and give evidence as you have to me. If he asks you afterwards why you have done so, say you have spoken in accordance with what you know to be the truth!" This apparently completes the soldiers' conversion. They file off, and as the curtain falls Aga Mardán sets out to approach the assessors of the court, so that when the case comes on "they too may keep time with their ears and tails."

The third and last act takes place in court. The President and a group of assessors are discovered chatting before the business of the day begins. Aga Mardán, with a smiling face, is also in court, but not upon the daïs where the others are seated. The assessors, evidently guiding their talk in accordance with a preconcerted plan, treat the President to some lavish flattery, and then adroitly introduce the subject of the case fixed for hearing that day. They one and all mention the existence of Háji Ghafúr's brat as a matter of common knowledge, and sandwich in allusions to Aga Mardán in the most complimentary terms. One of them even professes to see a likeness to Háji Ghafúr in the child's eyes and eyebrows! It is all so cleverly done that the wariest of men might be pardoned for remaining unsuspicious. The Qási, good

easy man, is readily gulled, and thanks his assessors for putting him in possession of information which will enable him to foil the alleged conspiracy on the part of Sakína and Azíz Beg, and promises to appoint Aga Mardán as the child's guardian if he will consent to act. Aga Mardán accepts the office as a pious duty, and promises to look after the child as if it were his own son. While the Qázi is gravely blessing him, the parties, except Sakína, who does not appear, are ushered into court, followed by their respective witnesses. The case begins. On the strength of the story which he has just heard the Qázi puts the burden of proof on the defendant. But such a trifle as this, of course, arouses no comment. The procedure is very primitive.

"*Qázi.* Aga Salmán, they tell me that Háji Ghafúr left issue. Can you disprove the statement?

Aga Salmán. My lord, I have witnesses that on his deathbed Háji Ghafúr testified that he had no heir but his sister Sakína.

Qázi. Let the witnesses give their evidence.

Aga Salmán [*to the soldiers*]. Give your evidence.

First Soldier. My lord, I and my comrades, the day before Háji Ghafúr's death, came to see him, and asked, 'Have you any sons or daughters?' He made answer, 'I have no one in the world but my sister Sakína.'

Qázi [*to the witness*]. Say 'God is my witness that this is what I heard.'

First Soldier. God is my witness that this is what I heard.

[*Aga Mardán and Aga Salmán turn pale with astonishment.*]

Qázi [*turning to the other soldiers*]. What did you hear? Speak one at a time.

Second Soldier. God is my witness that this is what I heard.

Third Soldier. God is my witness that this is what I heard.

Aga Mardán [*in great distress*]. Did you not see a little babe in his wife's arms at that time?

First Soldier. No, we saw a small baby in a different place. Do you wish us to tell about it?

Aga Mardán. Silence. [*Turning to the Qázi.*] My lord, I have several witnesses who say they saw a child a month old in Háji Ghafúr's arms on the day mentioned by the soldiers. They asked him whose it was, and he replied that it was his own. This is the child. The witnesses are standing before Your Worship [*points to his witnesses*]. Each one of them is a man of education, respectability, and unfeigned piety.

An Assessor. Aga Mardán, that young man looks like a son of Háji Sharíf. Is he?

Aga Mardán. Haji Sharíf? Aye, God rest his soul. He was of an honest stock.

Assessor. Such a man must needs have an honest son. Háji Sharíf was a very honest man.

Qázi [*addressing the witnesses*]. Tell whatever you know.

First Witness. Am I to tell whatever I know?

Qázi. Certainly, everything that is in your own knowledge.

First Witness. My lord, yesterday Aga Mardán summoned me with my companions to his house, and gave each of us fifteen tomans in cash to come before Your Worship to-day and say that at the time of the cholera we saw in Háji Ghafúr's arms his little son, a child a month old. I took the money to a gaming-house and staked it. As it had been given me for a wicked action it brought me no luck. I lost the whole fifteen tomans clean gone in one night. Beyond that, my lord, I have no knowledge. I never saw Háji Ghafúr nor do I know who he was.

[*Aga Mardán's mouth goes completely dry.*]

Qázi [*to the other witnesses*]. What do you say?

Witnesses [*all together*]. Yes, we say

the same as our comrade has already deposed."

The bewildered Qázi turns upon his assessors. The case against them seems clear enough to put any one to confusion. But Oriental impudence is not so easily disconcerted. One explains that the trust they reposed in Aga Mardán is a proof of their honesty and simplicity!

While they are still wrangling our friend the prince's head messenger comes in, presents His Highness's compliments, and asks whether the case has been proved in favour of Háji Ghafúr's sister or not. The Qázi replies that it has, and inquires what His Highness knows about the matter. The messenger replies that the conspiracy between the lawyers was reported to His Highness by no less a person than the Bazaar Superintendent (dissatisfied no doubt with his share of the spoil), and now that their scheme is frustrated and their guilt established, he is charged to take them into the royal presence, there to receive the punishment which is their due. It is due to the prince's intervention that the soldiers have spoken the truth. The Qázi knows nothing of Aga Salmán's share in the plot, nor has anything been proved against him. But such considerations go for little in the East, and he makes no demur at handing over to chastisement the two ornaments of the bar, on the strength of the prince's superior information. The prisoners are led out. Azíz Beg goes off rejoicing to tell the good news to Sakína and bid her make haste with her trousseau. The Qázi rises and the court is adjourned, the assessors still squabbling together and still heaping flattery upon their chief.

It had been my intention to run through the other two plays as well. But enough is as good as a feast. "The Alchemist" is a very puerile composition, and an excellent English translation of "The Vizier of Lankurán" is already in existence, to which those who are so minded can apply, if they want more of the honest Mirza's wares. For myself I will merely take leave in the Persian formula, "Ziáda tasdí' na mídiham" ("I will not give further cause of headache").

EVELYN HOWELL, I.C.S.

OLD MAN OSSO: BEARSLAYER AND GENTLEMAN.

IT was in the middle of a mesquite-clothed *vega*, that in its refreshing flatness lay like an oasis in a sun-steeped region of tortuous canyon and *barranca* near the Mexican frontier of the United States, that I made the acquaintance of Old Man Osso, child of nature and troglodyte. From somewhere out of the surrounding thickets he silhouetted into the foreground scenery, and sheered his heavy-set mustang up alongside of the pony I bestrode. He was a full-blown flower of the wilderness, in all its wild blushless beauty, and as he dangled upon, rather than sat in the saddle, with his petals drooped lopsidedly toward me, I had full opportunity to inspect him. His garb, like his pose, was négligé, not to say startling. In lieu of cloth-wove fabric, as known to civilisation and the tailor, he had hung upon his imposing two-hundred-pound six-foot structure a covering of stained and greasy buckskin, which flashed back the evening sun from many a well-worn spot: his rawhide nondescripts that did duty for boots were patently a product of home industry, as also was his somewhat antique mangy coonskin headgear: but the mountings of his belt and his earrings of silver ran into money: while from his battlements frowned a grisly armament of rifle barrel and knife handle.

Extending his hand, and with a low bow of his head, rendered the more impressive by reason of a tuft of his tawny mane which had sought the sunshine through a convenient rent in the coonskin headgear, and protruded therefrom like a tussock of dry bunch-grass, he saluted me. It was a desert place—some forty miles from nowhere—but to say that the advent of this unconventional and uncanny-looking personage into my proximity alarmed me would be an overstatement of fact: yet, momentarily I was taken aback, and perhaps even slightly showed that I was so. Certainly he had the advantage of me, for as it was most unlikely that if I had ever met him before I could have forgotten him, I was convinced that I really did not know him. However, it was not Piccadilly; I resented him not, but met his advances with a nod. Taking in my horse and myself with a keen glance, he addressed me: "Buenos dias, pardner; how long mought ye have been afoot?" I looked at the wild person as calmly as possible and reflectively sighed. This verbal salutation, coming from an unkempt stranger as it did, struck me as tending to familiarity and to some extent detracting from my dignity. I further recalled to mind the various worthy, cultured, and fascinating partners with whom it had been my fortune to have been associated in the past,—in commercial enter-

prise, in the whist rubber, and in the mazes of the dreamy waltz,—and I felt that my admission now of the present aspirant's claim to be included in the list might be compromising to their memories. Then, as to the second and interrogative part of his remark, relative to my being afoot, it was, I considered, based on a premiss of untruth, and was besides a slur upon my excellent, though presently somewhat jaded, mount. So my acknowledgment of his greeting was merely "Howdy": his query I airily let slip unheeded into the mesquite landscape. Nothing disconcerted, he at once sprung on me a second conundrum. "Pardner, how are ye fixed for chawin?" Here again I was disposed to believe the framing of the question was derogatory to my personality, in that it assumed a use of the narcotic leaf by me in what is frequently considered an objectionable way; I therefore briefly signified my regret that I did not carry the article in the form he indicated. He then proceeded to excuse his importunacy by explaining how he had run short of tobacco a day or two ago, and at the present juncture was "mighty nigh suffocatin' for some." Now the thought of a fellow-creature,—and a great, strong, healthy creature at that,—expiring through suffocation in that lone place for lack of a quid, was dreadful. Clearly something had to be done. In default of ambulance accommodation, and as a possible rough and ready first aid, I hastily produced a cheroot and tendered it. The effect was electric. His brightened eye glittered his gratitude, as he clutched it without so much as inquiring the brand, and his thanks came in unconventional form, "Cigarro, cigarro, whoo-rr-oog! If ye don't much mind, pardner, I'll use her this away"—and nipping the weed in two halves with his incisors, with a deft movement he neatly and completely stowed them both away among his molars. Seemingly the restorative allayed the respiratory trouble at once; and with the stimulation of his maxillary glands his salivary flow and good-fellowship came together. "Mebbe so, pardner, ye'd like to mend up your jigger for a bit; if so be ye do, we'll hit for home." As it happened, I was more or less at liberty to do such a thing, and was besides right then a bit bothered about my geography among these awkward canyons, where I had spent the best of a day in a general mix-up: so I felt it behoved me to take advantage of this hospitable proposition, and I assented. This being settled, we struck across the flat, avalanched down the death-droppy side of a rocky chasm, and snaked a mile or two along its bed, my guide the while ever fatherly watching and strenuously assisting my mount and self in the more breakneck places. Reaching the Rio Grande, which at that part of its course ran deep and red through a narrow strip of valley walled in on either hand by bluff and cliff, he sized up our swimming powers, and

selecting a point where we could most safely negotiate it, we landed on the Mexican side. A farther short ride brought us *home*.

As may be surmised, the home of my host was no every-day "stone-built, slated and private" domicile, nor plank and shingle affair. Neither was there an eye there to mark his coming and grow brighter when he came. The watch-dog's honest bark to bay him deep-mouthed welcome he did have, however, and from the open-sepulchre throats of a pack of maybe honest, but very wolfish-looking and very hungry, hounds, confined in a high stockade, the welcome came in a salvo worthy of the homeward weary wend of a belated emperor. Hobbling out our horses, we ascended the policies by a winding avenue of single-file magnificence, and found ourselves on a spacious shelf some three-score feet above the valley. Had one gone forth to find a fit setting for this primeval son of the canyon, no better could have been selected. Here, "remote from busy life's bewildered way," he had established his homestead and sat him down "the monarch of a shed." The architect and builder of the shed had been Nature herself: and saving for certain modifications where the present or some former human tenant had improved upon her cosmoplastic "prentice hand," the cavern—for such it was—stood in its original, paleolithic state and style. An Arabic proverb says that three things make the heart of man glad—water, vegetation, and beautiful faces. The amenities of this dwelling embraced the lot; for here was a spring—the regulation hermit's crystal-flowing article,—and here, mantling the wide entry walls, were bushes and creeping vines, and the open face of Nature in wondrous beauty lay like a picture in front. A wave of the owner's mighty hand bade me welcome, and announcing with another of his courtly bows that this was the home of Osso the hunter, he gave me the freedom of the citadel, while he busied himself with fire building and food preparation. Accordingly I made myself at home, and sauntered over the premises. In the space of a few minutes I found myself on the back trail to yesterday, and soon I slipped out of the twentieth century and dropped clear into the ages of the bygone. Since that evening and date I have travelled much "along the cool sequestered vales of life," and, in remotenesses far from carpets, finger-bowls, and four-posters, I have held diggings in regal dug-out; headquartered in gregal tabernacle; bowered in the leafy forest, and hung out on the mountain face: and I have wigwammed and waggoned, and pillowed my ribs on the crust of this oblate spheroid in many an airy, hypaethral haunt; but never have I found stranger quarters than this fastness, or a scene that looked more as though it had stepped out of a stone-age melodrama. From the general look of the fixtures and portable properties, the place ap-

peared to have been occupied for years; but modern conveniences there were none, and everything, from earthenware cooking vessels to rock-cleft cupboards, was tinctured with the primitive. But the grand feature, scheme, motive, and soul of the place was *Bear*. In the useful and the ornamental this animal was everywhere in interesting and superabundant evidence. Hung and spread here and there, and covering the crude sleeping pallets, were dressed skins; stretched on poles and rock faces, a short distance from the cave mouth, were recently removed and still very raw hides; while teeth, claws, and polished skulls, all formerly belonging to Bruin, quaintly decorated the interior and outposts. Swung in a cool larder recess was a bear's fresh hindquarter; and on another part of the terrace were a couple of chained baby bears tumbling round in play; and strung in festoons were scraps of meat in the process of jerking. I even imagined that mine host himself, with his generously-haired countenance and a certain facial look to him, and also a loose-jointed, shuffling gait he had as he went about his work, had taken on a considerable resemblance to the family, as indeed he might well enough have done, thus living and moving and having his being with and in the creature. The atmosphere at large was undeniably and undesirably redolent of the species, in the quick and the dead, the raw and the cooked. Then, as a finishing touch of consistency, the constellation of old slow-moving Ursa Major came out and twinkled down on our bear-land, back-world scene. There are epochs, and times of unwonted sensation in life, when vivid thoughts mould themselves and stand out in strong relief on one's mind; and I distinctly recollect that as I meandered round that evening on this prehistoric cliff-ledge that was to be my home for a season—renewing relations, as it were, with an earlier existence—how thankful I felt I had not arrived in my top-hat.

Some people are by nature Nimrods, whose souls delight in the chase and the slaying of anything and everything, from a roaring lion to a sucking dove. Others care not for this sort of thing at all, dislike the botheration of it, and rather abhor the Kill itself, and also the clawing ways of the irritated creatures. I belong to the latter bunch. "A Stoic of the woods, a man without a tear," who "calls from their woodland haunts the savage train with sounding horn and counts them on the plain," is an individual whose society I seldom crave or seek; and the man with the gun (unless I am in direct line of fire) does not interest me one little bit. I like the howffs of the hunter, if I can loaf in them without having to smite and destroy, save for the necessity of the pot. To be yet more candidly explanatory, my marksmanship is erratic and desultory—a failing, I may say in passing, that in backwoods parts I have frequently found annoying and trying, particularly on

occasions of a Ramadan-Fast appetite and a vacant frying-pan. This cave-man hunter, however, was out of the regular run. There was, too, a certain lovableness about him: the situation was novel, and the lure of his troglodyte life was strong: so, on his cliff-ledge and among his canyons, I lodged and pardnered with him for several moons.

By the few who knew him, my pardner went by the name Osso (a corruption of the Spanish for bear); and deferentially, as Old Man Osso. They might well enough have added by way of a surname *brown* or *cinnamon*, but they had not done so; and simply as Old Man Osso he was called and was pleased to call himself. His age was uncertain, possibly past middle; yet he was active as a young mule, and a very athlete for strength. Uncouth in his externals, rude in his surroundings and ideas, he was yet a smooth, restful personality, in whose company it was good to be. Albeit he was easygoing and with little of method or routine, when he set himself to anything in the nature of work he buckled to, like a Titan. In addition to his hunting pursuits he cultivated a small patch of vegetables, maize, "gyp corn," and tobacco, where he could toil terribly when he wanted, and in an incredibly short time get through a mighty pull of work, his task never so engrossing him, however, as to let it stand in the way of anything trivial that cropped up which might chance then and there to interest him more. Osso had no history. At any rate he had none for me: for, except in the matter of occasional zoological reminiscences, he unlocked not the past. As I found him I took him, without references, and asked no questions relative to his antecedents; neither did he concern himself as to mine. Civilised man disquieteth himself in a vain shadow; Osso did not. He lived in the present, acquiescing in the actual hour, repining not on things past, nor fashing about nor foretasting the future. He took his viewpoint of life at as short a range as possible, even as he liked to take his bears, and, in the technical phraseology of the rifle, he "drew his bead on it" at that, without raising his sights. He had that great gift, the intense Nature love, the which when a man has it to the full, frequently gives him, rough though he be, high principles and sweet graces. Furrowed was his forehead, scarred and seamed his rugged features, all unpolished his speech; but at heart Osso was a child, simple, natural, sincere: and ever unselfish as a comrade, and wholly fearless in danger, he was a man, bearing upon him the seal of Nature's gentleman. Like Diogenes, he found in each day a feast. "Athens," said Epictetus, "is a good place,—but happiness is far better; to be free from passion, free from disturbance." It may perhaps be selfish to hold one's self thus free, troubling not at all about the conditions of other people, and looking solely after one's own self and surroundings; yet despite doc-

trines to the contrary, it often makes much for the content of the individual who chooses and is situated to so do. And one knew, without any "perhaps," that Osso was content. If he ever had a heart-cry for other things, he languaged it not. Civilisation in any shape held no charms for him, as was shown by his uneasy haste to get back to his wilds on the rare occasions when he carried his pelts to a distant trading post and converted them into a pack-horse load of necessaries—always on terms highly gratifying to the skin-buyer. Sooner or later, to even the most ardent Nature-worshipping recluses, if they be not veritable savages or unbalanced fanatics, the longing comes for at least the temporary society of the fellow-man; and then with a feeling that they miss something, they roam their woods, inwardly ejaculating, like the dwarf in the lay, "Lost, Lost, Lost." But Osso, being a great lover as well as killer of animals, fell back on them for company. He had a scattered menagerie of half-tame pets, in corners that had been appropriated to them, and were held sacred from his traps and the noisy inroads of his bloodthirsty hounds. In his intercourse with these friends he was at his best: and on his rounds of visitation, upon which I made it a point to accompany him, I believe I derived as much pleasure as the four-footed folk themselves. As among them "mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove," he was an improved version of Æsop. "The thummart wil' cat, brook, and tod weel kenned his voice through a' the wood. He smelt their ilka hole and road baith out and in." So when Mrs Grey Squirrel was abroad or Mr Bull Snake not at home to his inquiring whistle, it was a disappointment to us all round. By a patient, watchful study of the habits, tastes, and etiquette of fur and feather he had got it down to a cult; and entering into their lives he could put himself so thoroughly on a par with an opossum, or so share the sorrows of a green-backed mud-turtle, that an undiscerning animal might easily enough have mistaken him for its father. When in the way of business a beast had to die at his hands, it was quite another matter. For in his philosophies he was, like many other elementary existers, an out-and-out fatalist,—albeit merciful, in so far as he could be, in the despatch of his prey. Of course his dogs were his main chums; for together they had been in many a fray, as their hides and his own cuticle bore witness. To one, with a defect in its gait, he was especially attached. This dog, it appeared, had got snake-bitten and been cured by the old hunter's Æsculapian skill. Most snake-bitten dogs that recover at all have periodic spells of sickness from the effects of the poison, and are thereafter mortally afraid of reptiles: this one, however, was a complete cure, and would actually hunt and kill them without instigation.

While in his dealings with mankind Osso was courteous, beyond that it is doubtful if he

was capable of going. Anything he had in the way of sentimental affection went strictly to the lower species. So far as his own genus was concerned he was like the primitive Algonquin Indians in whose language the missionaries had to invent a word for *love*, these stern, tepid-hearted children of darkness having hitherto found no use for so tender an expression. It was true he liked his home, and I fancied at times he conjured up a sort of liking for his pardner too; and after long and wide ramblings he seemed to experience a certain sweetness from his return to us. Perhaps a devotional feeling towards some Caviduca or domestic tutelary spirit, somewhere hovering round those cliff quarters, was awakened in his strange mentality; since the joy of home-coming is said to be from within as well as without. At times he was conversational, but his themes were of the flora floral and of the fauna faunal. For him the fate of nations was as nothing beside his success or failure in the tracking of a honey-laden humble bee to its hollow-tree nest: and his eye was more fixed on the discovery of a wild-turkey roost than on any fall of kings, or the biggest social problem of the century. For of the outer world he wot not.

Between my partner and me there were neither business transactions nor financial arrangements. What little assistance I gave him involved no brain-work, nor did what advice he had to impart involve any penmanship. His day-book, ledger, and library was the illuminated manuscript of Nature: and whether he could as much as trace his own signature remains unknown to me. When occasion arose in our backwoods' ploys for me to carry out any plans that could not be communicated beforehand by word of mouth, his instructions were "spelt by the unlettered muse" of the broken twig or barked trunk, after the manner of the *ab origine filius terræ*, and with an understanding of suchlike codes we got along very well. Unlike many proficients in special sylvan callings, who take a pleasure and a pride in airing their acquired superior knowledge, and believe that in the matter of advice it is better to give than to receive, Osso seemed ever anxious to keep himself in the background, and rather to feel a reluctance in offering counsel at all, except in so far as was absolutely necessary. Then, too, when given, it was in a tentative and querying way, as though inviting your opinion instead of advancing his own. It would be, "How do you think it will do now if you and me did" such and such? or "I've bin kind o' wonderin' if you mought agree with my notion that" so and so. And as my thoughts and notions about the points in question would generally have been as valuable as so much breathed air, I was astute enough to hold my peace. As a rule Osso, till he opened up on a favourite

subject, was sparing of speech. Like some savages, he had those dignified spells of self-contained reticence and *sub silentio* movements that look as though they are imparted by constant association with the silent majesty of the wilderness. But be that so, or be it but constitutional brain torpor and poverty of vocabulary, this absence of the *furor loquendi* in the simple ones of the earth has one advantage when you have much close association with them. You are less apt to be bored. One point in Osso's stolidity, which one could not help admiring, was his non-indulgence in that venting of hasty thoughts in unexpurgated and unprintable form so commonly practised in moments of vexation and emotion by persons of the supposedly rougher and more illiterate order. My partner did no top-of-his-voice thinking whatever, and in the unlovely "cuss words" of commerce he was dumb. For the biggest occasions a monosyllabic utterance of his own coining sufficed. Like certain caged parrots one sometimes sees, who have pet expressions peculiar to themselves, and which do duty for disapproval, annoyance, insult, vituperation, or Christian resignation as required (such as one interesting bird I knew whose psittaceous all-purpose expletive took the form of "Wog"), Osso found satisfaction in a fervently or philosophically uttered "Whoo-rr-oog." As a mental tonic and panacea it seemed to be hard to beat.

Game in our immediate hunting-grounds was shy and not over plentiful, yet by ranging widely, deer, racoon, catamount, beaver, and a few Mexican lions or cougars were to be found; and these, along with the bears, which last were of a small variety, kept Osso in occupation. The region was not so wild as to preclude enterprising range-cattle finding their way into it, so the hunter was looked upon as a benefactor by the scattering stockmen on the north side of the river; for that sweet day when "the cow and the bear shall feed, and their young ones shall lie down together," is not yet awhile. On some of his expeditions my partner preferred to be alone, and as certain of his spoor appointments called him far, and meant tedious night watchings and also shin-bruising, joint-twisting manœuvres among "rocks confusedly hurled" and "fragments of an earlier world," it suited me to fill my position in the firm as the *sleeping* partner and to remain abed. Moreover, it was a practice of Osso, in his fatalistic way, to take risks with his larger game that were disagreeable to a neophyte huntsman like myself. Close-quarter engagements with antagonists such as bears, to which he sometimes resorted, were a branch of his profession in which I was not eager to attain proficiency. Even if they were in the light-weight class of the species, still they were bears. On general principles, likely arising from his distance

from supplies, Osso was saving of his ammunition, and had a way of going round of a morning to visit his traps and fix his baits without troubling to carry along his rifle, giving his varmint prisoners their nepenthe stroke by means of a knife or the back of a light short hatchet he always carried. Upon these trips he likewise dispensed with the dogs, as being in the way.

It chanced one morning, soon after my sojourn in the cave began, that in going the rounds we discovered in some marshy ground the fresh impression of a plantigrade foot. To my inexperienced bulging eyes this ursine autograph, unduly spread as it was in that soft spot, looked about the size of a dinner-plate, and I pictured in my heated imagination an animal like a mammoth grizzly; and as Osso as a matter of course had to follow on, and I in the capacity of partner could do nothing less, though minus a weapon, than accompany him, I was a wee bit excited. The tracks, which by dint of inscrutable skill the senior member of the firm managed to trail, fetched us up, after some hours of walking, in a cramped corner of a narrow ravine; and here they finally led—so Osso assured me—into a cleft that ran horizontally into the rock wall. After all our labour to reach this objective, it looked to me as though we had pretty well drawn a blank; for the den was a most uninviting-looking place, and too hard a proposition for the most enthusiastic hunter to think of taking by storm. Under the seemingly dispiriting circumstances I half expected and fondly hoped that Osso would see things in this light, and that he would find solace in his philosophic note and retire. Herein I was off my reckoning. Pronouncing the occupant of the hole to be, in his opinion, "a wollopin' lump o' a near grown bar," he besought my ideas upon the advisability of our "smokin' and rostin' him up a bit, and standin' by to see what sort o' stuff he was made of when he oozed into the daylight." My views anent this interesting programme, with its grimly suggestive vista of possibilities, being altogether too mixed for current speech, I did not commit myself by advancing them. Vaguely, in the back of my mind, I did have some idea that smoking and toasting might not prove soothing to the temper of a bear, but might, if he happened in the treatment to get even a little overdone, arouse in him a spirit of retaliation. To my way of thinking, moreover, the parboiling or barbecuing of a bear was an operation that needed much judgment and a very delicate touch, particularly if the operator expected to be present at the denouement. Osso, however, was running the business. Procuring dry sticks, green leaves, and brush, and we having kindled these in the den mouth, the fumigation process began. While awaiting developments, my partner, in a casual and quite matter-of-fact way, produced from some recess of his habiliments a short, double-

edged knife,—a really nasty, dangerous-looking affair, and very sharp, — and this he handed me. Now I dislike a lethal weapon of the edged-steel order exceedingly. Back a few centuries ago my ancestors may have flourished their skean-dhus, claymores, or piratical cutlasses in following their avocations, but in the walks of life which I have pursued I have succeeded in dispensing with anything in that line. Mechanically, however, I laid hold of the thing, and for a brief moment I felt the wild blood of my heritage stir as the glory thrills coursed through me and I pictured the carnage that would ensue when I arose in my might and fell upon that emerging bear. (Some of the old people with the skean-dhus had doubtless done something of the sort.) A guttural, growly sound from the rock fissure which began to be discernible about then rapidly changed the spirit of my dream, and straightway I was my discreet self again. Having no knowledge of what "a wollopin' lump" of bear actually indicated, but reflecting that the dimensions of the growl and the footprint seemed to be pretty well in proportion, I concluded that my first suspicions were right, and it was in all probability a bear of the first magnitude, with a battle strength equal to coping with any emergency. I further reflected that for me to take part in the prospective engagement with this *monstrum horrendum*, with merely that very abbreviated weapon in my hand, might be rash. I accordingly decided on a course of action. Hastily calling a general meeting of all my available sensations, instincts, and inclinations, and laying the situation before them and putting the question to the convention, the vote went *nem. com.* resolved, that as discretion under certain circumstances is, &c. &c.—we do look out, and if need be have business elsewhere about the time of the crisis. Meanwhile, outwardly trying to appear as dangerous as possible, after critically examining the knife edge and further whetting it on my shoe sole, I proceeded to cut down a long slim pole, and to take off my belt. These moves were diplomatic, precautionary, and strategic, as they afforded me opportunity to convert the knife into a spear by binding it on one end of the pole, and also to inspect the condition of my footwear, and to judge of its reliability for high velocities down the rugged bed of the ravine. It must be remembered by the intrepid reader that I was then but a tyro hunter: and indeed, outside of a zoo or similar well-guarded enclosure, or in company of a muzzle and a foreign-spoken gentleman, I had never met a member of the bear family before. This, however, is by the way: let us proceed with the adventure. The whuffings in the hole grew more intense. Noting, most providentially, that my berserker partner stood hatchet in hand at one side of the entrance, it occurred to me that I was stationed too much in front and liable to be cut off from

support. So with presence of mind I evacuated the position and fell back in good order on the main body. From there the situation did not appear quite so grave, though the ominous music in the interior of the oven was by this time fortissimo. Presently the enemy made his sortie. Now from a knowledge of bear warfare derived from story-book illustrations, I was aware that the animal's tactics are to advance on his foe erect upon his hind legs, aggressive, towering, and terrible, and with his arms open for his deadly enfolding act. I allowed that the artist people who get up these things, having, of course, been through the experience, knew just how they were. Moreover, although I had never before adventured with a bear, I felt assured that this one of ours, having had a reasonably prolonged toasting, was certain to be in primest man-slaughtering form. But instead of all this, he came forth on all-fours, he was reassuringly small, and he actually forgot to elevate himself. And, albeit his fur was a bit singed, by some mistake he was scared and quite eager to make his escape. Can such things be?—you ask. Clear as a trumpet-note rings back the answer: They can. They be. Anyhow these were the symptoms of this bear. Our side behaved splendidly. Hip and thigh we fell upon him, and with our battle hatchet we clove him. Then when in his extremity he showed some fight, we clove him again. The combat was brief, only a matter of moments in fact; but life is lived by moments after all, and during these few mighty moments I could feel that my spear and I were making history right along. The victory was decisive, fortune being with our forces throughout; even in the confusion and excitement of battle, in my lunges and prods I didn't jab our front ranks worth mentioning. When all was over, and we stood on the field of the dead, I found my blade was perceptibly enough tinged with sanguineous stain (ursine, I believed) to allow me conscientiously to rank myself as a participant in the triumph, and to save my credit as a member of a bear-hunting firm. During the post-mortem flaying operations Osso expressed himself as a good deal disappointed over the very commonplace limited area and cubic contents of the beast.

Personally I lost no sleep over that detail, and was only regretful I had not been aware of his trifling avoirdupois during the trying eve of battle. Not being, as before explained, a votary of Diana, my account of this episode of the chase may lack the appropriate technicality of expression. I have done my best. The experienced bear-hunter reader, for whom, of course, it was written, will no doubt understand just how it was.

Marcus Aurelius tells us "a spider is proud when he has caught a fly, a man when he has caught a hare, . . . and

another when he has taken bears." Free as he was from ways of vanity, Osso had yet a something of this pride, and took a mild kind of glory in his exploits and the contemplation of his captures. Each big slay that he accomplished inspired him to another, and made him the bolder, even as the conquests of Alexander incited that world-hungry warrior to further enterprises: only Osso's valour was fed by no outside adulation, for there was nobody to feed it; and he altogether lacked the self-exaltation of the great Macedonian. What religion Osso had was of the heart rather than the head. An unseen Power and Controller of the Universe he believed in, but theological profundities and psychical problematicals vexed not his thinkings: and he was exempt from those dreads and terrors of the supernatural so common among earth's lower orders. Neither did he share their superstitions in any respect. His calendar was marked by no red-lettered days of good luck or black-lettered days of *fata obstant*, nor was he given to readings of the night heavens by way of furthering his affairs.

When I came to dissolve with Osso I did so with reluctance: for, such is the thrusting power of habit, I was getting fairly to enjoy our lotus-land cavern existence. My partner, in his undemonstrative way, left unsaid whether or no our copartnery had been satisfactory. Nevertheless his mooted proposition that we maintain the relationship on a lifetime basis spoke some. It served to hasten my departure, however. Cold analysis clearly showed me that to linger longer would not do; and that a deliberate assumption by me of the habits of Pithecanthropus Alalus, he of the Neanderthal skull, would be the occultation of my luminosity under a bushel, and distinctly and palpably a retrocession of my right of inheritance as an "heir of all the ages": which so to relinquish would be an unwarrantable retrogradation and decadency indicative of an obstruent tendency on the part of an entity in the grand scheme and design of mundane progress. I didn't tell the senior partner all this. Coming from the junior, the turning on of such a verbal sluice of idea might have proved embarrassing to him.

In his ignorant bliss I left the cave-dweller—two-fifths pitying his ignorance *of* things, three-fifths envying his freedom *from* things. For, if the restful sublimity of the desert yields delight; if the rude, simple "sincerity of savage life" and the forgetting of one's self in the beasts that walk and the birds that fly, are more to be desired than the refined complexities and the hollow distractions of the civilised; and if, as the poet sings,

> "It's no in makin' muckle mair,
> It's no in books—it's no in lear
> To mak us truly blest,"—

Osso was blest.

JOHN PIRIE.

WOMEN IN NORTHERN NIGERIA.

"WOMEN are a very strong folk." This is a fair rendering of the position of the sex in Northern Nigeria, and was the considered utterance of a Pagan chief[1] of ripe experience, who had himself married 500 of them. The remark was induced by a discussion on the temples of his country, into which no women are allowed to enter on pain of death—a penalty that was enforced until a few years ago. The motive that prompts this prohibition is not due to the belief that her presence is sacrilegious, nor merely that the men wish to secure for themselves a clubhouse safe from interruption, but it is rather the promptings of chivalry: so they say, for a woman likes her husband to be stronger than herself. As there are husband-beaters in Bassa,[2] and Amazons in Yola,[3] and women with a will of their own in every community, this desirable condition cannot be assured unless the men back their authority with the terrors of superstition, by which means the priests and elders have long known how to enforce their will.

There is a tribe[4] which subscribes to this same doctrine with a more honest directness, but perhaps that is because men are in the preponderance. By their tribal law none but the young and strong are recognised as husbands. When a man passes his prime—at about the age of forty to forty-five—he becomes subject to the attacks of any young blood, who, as the reward of victory, wins the wives of the vanquished elder.

Nor is it the pagans only who plot to establish male supremacy. It was recently suggested to the Mohammedan Emir of Zaria that machinery for pounding grain might be introduced with advantage to his kingdom. He demurred, however, pleading that it is a hard enough task for a man to dominate his women as it is, but if this their principal work were rendered unnecessary, the situation would become impossible. And it is easy to imagine that a muscular vigour which finds a healthy outlet night and morning in this employment might, on its cessation, seek some occupation less productive of domestic peace.

Despite their power, the women of Nigeria, according to our ideas, though not according to their own, labour under one humiliating disqualification: they are debarred from the great right of spinsterhood. Among the ten million inhabitants of Northern Nigeria there are but two exceptions: the priestess of the

[1] Sarkin Langtang, Yergum, Muri Province.
[2] Bassa-Komo.
[3] Longuda.
[4] Dingai, Yola Province.

shrine of the much-feared Juda,[1] a goddess with the attributes of a Judge Jeffreys; and a certain princess who is queen over all women and all slaves, but who is not allowed to marry.[2]

Among certain tribes the haste for marriage is such that some girls are betrothed even before their birth,[3] while others are engaged when they are three days old to small suitors aged six years.[4] In this case the duties of the menage begin at once, and the boy, with the help of his guardian, there and then brings wood and water for the benefit of his infant bride. When she first laughs he brings her a string of beads, and on that proud day when she can walk alone, he gives her a bridal gift of a strip of cloth and a calabash, for from that time forth the seven-year-old groom is responsible for her and must provide her with food, &c.; though she continues to live with her mother, and presently does some house-work under her mother's direction—the only form of authority allowed to either parent by the young *prétendu*. When she is about seven years old he builds her a hut of her own in her parents' compound, to which he has the right of entry; though, until she finally goes to her husband's house some three or four years later, she may throw him over, in which case she returns to him all his presents.

There is great diversity in the preliminaries of marriage, but in the main it seems to be a commercial arrangement, based on the principle that the parents should receive some return for the trouble and expense they have expended upon a girl in her early years. The more primitive tribes, however, practise marriage by exchange—*i.e.*, a man gives his sister, his daughter, or his brother's daughter in exchange for the sister, daughter, or niece of some other man; but where this is done he may not secure for himself two or more wives until all the male members of his family are provided with one.[5] The Munshi who patronise this system exercise great care to make the transaction as even as possible, and if it happens that one wife has more children than another, she hands over one or two to the less fortunate mother.

Another system is one with which we are familiarised by the story of Jacob, but the conditions in Nigeria are not so severe as those imposed by Laban, and in place of the seven years required by him, it generally suffices for the pagan suitor to work several days in each month on his prospective father-in-law's farm during the sowing and harvesting seasons. It is true that he brings friends to aid him, but he in his turn has to help them in the like case. He begins his suit when

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[1] Batta, Yola Province.
[2] The Agya, Jukum, Muri Province.
[3] Ganagana, Niger Province.
[4] Mumbake, Yola Province.
[5] Kona, Yola Province.

the bride is three or four years old, and his obligations continue for some nine years more, when the marriage is consummated.

The third and most common marriage custom is that of dower, which is sometimes taken in conjunction with labour, and sometimes stands alone, and is subject to endless variations. Some brides, on an auction system, fetch as much as £20;[1] for others a hundred rats, three goats, and a hoe is considered liberal provision;[2] others again, generally the daughters of chiefs[3] who can afford to forgo the price, are given to men so poor that they can pay nothing at all. It is this latter system which prevails among the great Mohammedan races, and as their religion has modified many of the customs that they used to practise as pagans, it may be well to give a brief account of the ordinary life of Moslem women—Nupe in this example — before comparing others with it. The first-born, whether boy or girl, is hated by its parents; they will not look at it nor give it a name, but only call it "boy" or "girl." The mother would often refuse to feed it but that her husband's parents come and live with her for three months to see that she fulfils that duty. Sometimes they take the baby away with them and give it to some wet-nurse, and in no case is it left with its parents after it is weaned. Nevertheless a large percentage die of neglect.

With this exception the general love of children is pronounced, and from the time they make acquaintance with the outdoor world, bound on their mother's backs with their little heads swaying from side to side, they always look happy and are infinitely spoilt. They are independent little people, and once they can walk, stump about together dressed sometimes in long flowing robes, or more often in nothing at all. They have toys, but these have not anything like the importance that they have with us, and the children more usually make mud-pies, or play at hide-and-seek and king-of-the-castle. On the day of the Mohammedan New Year there is a great fête, when they may raid the house of any uncle, aunt, grand-parent, or person who practises the same trade as their father, and loot anything they can find in it. The children of the house act as garrison, and great battles are waged between them and the marauders. If the house is undefended the elders may purchase immunity by paying twenty cowries to each child, after which they and their property are safe.

The Nupe are eminently a practical people. They recognise that devoted parents could never bear to deny their children anything, though they could quite easily exercise a

[1] Ganagana, Niger Province.
[2] Yundam, Yola Province.
[3] Emir of Bida, Nupe.

little wholesome discipline in the case of other people's children. Therefore it has become a matter of course that when a child reaches the age of four, whether it be boy or girl, its father's brother, sister, or father carries it off, and has entire control over it until it is married. Should it attempt to return to its parents it is sent back again and whipped. The exception to this rule is when the parents are rich enough to send it away to a boarding-school, and then the child lives with the Mallam and his wives for some ten years without a break before returning to its people. Tiny girls are taught by the Mallam himself, but as they grow older their education is carried on by his wives. The schools are an institution which have been very largely patronised for over one hundred years, and a successful Mallam will have as many as fifty or sixty scholars at a time. Rich and poor go to them alike, for the fee is often only 20,000 cowries = 8s., payable at the end of the ten-year term. Girls have the same training as boys. They study the Koran; they learn reading and writing, first in Arabic, then in their native tongue and Hausa; sewing; and in the later stages figures. At some schools they work for as much as ten hours every day, at intervals from 4 A.M. till 8 P.M. They have, however, whole holidays on Thursdays and Fridays. The Mallams exercise strict control, and are in full agreement with the old maxim of "spare the rod and spoil the child," and in this too there is equality between the sexes. If the children try to run away they are put into leg-irons, and one sometimes sees carved upon a door the warning sign of an anklet and chain alongside of a writing-board.[1]

This long period of education shows that the Mohammedan does not promote child marriages, and the Nupe girls do not usually marry till they are about twenty. The procedure is as follows. A man who wishes to marry into a certain family comes and calls on the father, and gives him, his wife, and his daughter some small present, which process he repeats till on the third occasion he formally announces the reason of his visit. The matter is laid before the girl, and she has the right of refusal, and if she exercises it, her people set about to find her some other husband. Occasionally a girl is very *difficile*, and says "No" to all her suitors, one after the other; and when that happens, her mother tells her the following tale. It relates how parents in similar circumstances, reduced to despair, washed their hands of their daughter and said, "Very well, go into the market and choose a husband for yourself." Nothing loth, the girl started off, and in a little while she espied a group of tall strangers, with one of

[1] Basza.

whom she fell violently in love. She came back and described them to her father, who went out and asked first one citizen and then another who the strangers were, but no one could answer him. The girl, however, persisted, and at last persuaded her father to send to them and bid them come to his house. The interview resulted in marriage between the girl and the unknown man. For some days they lived in the town, she and he and his friends; but they would not tell her whence they came nor whither they were bound. At the end of that time they said that they were going back to their own country, and told the girl she could not come with them. She determined not to be left thus, and lay awake, watching all night. She heard nothing, but when morning came, though her husband was there his comrades had gone. He told her that he must delay no longer, and fiercely forbade her to spy upon him. She feigned obedience, but nevertheless watched, and when he went out, stole after him and followed, but so far off that he did not know she was there. Thus they passed out of the town and into the bush, and though his form was soon lost in the windings of the path, she saw the mark of his footsteps on the sandy track, and struggled after, panting now and with aching limbs, for he moved with tireless stride. As dusk came she forced herself to run, for the path they followed was no longer one that had been made by man, but by wild beasts, and she dared not face the darkness and the terror alone. She was descending a slope now, and by the brilliance of the green and the luxuriance of the vegetation could tell she was nearing water, when suddenly her eyes lit on her husband, and fearing intangible horrors more than his certain anger, she called his name loudly. He turned in response, but there was a glitter in his small eyes such as she had never seen before. He did not stop, and in another second disappeared behind a clump of tall rushes. She heard a splash, and saw the ripples spreading wide in the water, and ran forward precipitately that she too might throw herself into the stream and swim after him to the opposite shore; but as she stumbled down the steep bank and into the pool, a large crocodile rose slowly to the surface—the only living thing in all that waste. There the story ends, but the mother finds it an invaluable argument with her daughter should she be tempted to choose some unknown adventurer for husband—and there are few, either old or young, who are bold enough to deny that wild beasts can appear in human shape.

A more material danger is that the adventurer should prove to be a "boy" in the service of the white man, or a soldier, or a policeman; for they are regarded as outcasts from their people, having

abandoned their customs and traditions and become denationalised. As a matter of fact, their wives are recruited from among widows and divorcees, with very few exceptions, though a class amongst themselves is now rapidly springing into being. They are not of a high morality, and a boy will speak of his "old" wife when they have been married only eighteen months, which denotes with what speed they mutually seek a divorce and felicity in some new union. One enterprising lady undertook to marry three horse-boys collectively, but as the day approached jibbed at the prospect, and the three together sued her in court for breach of promise. The danger of marriage into this class is carefully guarded against by good parents, who moreover do their best to secure for their daughter the privilege of being a man's first wife. The engagement is formally recognised when the suitor gives 12s. 6d. in money and two calabashes of kola-nuts to the father, and 7s. 6d. in money and one calabash of kola-nuts to the mother, which each respectively distributes among the male and female members of their family. From this time on the pretendant must work on his father-in-law's farm or house, together with his friends, two or three times a year, and every big Salla he gives his bride 5s. worth of cloths and 2s. to have her hair dressed. This period may last for some years, as a boy is sometimes betrothed at the age of ten or twelve and a girl at five or seven; but early engagements are, however, considered undesirable, and the yearly cost to the groom effectually tends to discourage them. A careful count is kept of all that he gives, so that it may be returned if the girl should ultimately refuse to consummate the marriage. Once they are engaged the boy and girl may not play together, though up to the time of marriage they may do so with any one else. In fact, a boy and girl may declare themselves "saranchi," or great friends, and are allowed to go to each other's houses until such time as one or other of them marries.

When the wedding-day approaches the groom gives his wife three cloths and a handkerchief, at a minimum value of 30s., and if she does not like these he has selected she returns them, and he must send others till she is satisfied. At the same time he gives her parents £2, 10s., which they spend on an outfit for their daughter—pots, pans, mats, &c. A rich man gives something under £4, and spends perhaps as much as £9 or £10 on cloths. If he is unable to raise all this money at once, an arrangement can be made in the Alkali's court by which he is bound over to make up the deficit within a given time, and, so long as he is able to give his wife 1250 cowries (value 6d.) for her first "chop" money, they may marry at once. When the wedding takes place

there is a great feasting. For three days and three nights the rejoicings are carried on in the bride's home, and on the fourth day the groom carries her to his house, where the festivities are continued for another four days and four nights without intermission. These ended, custom demands that both should remain in seclusion for a week, and the bride is not allowed to go abroad for three months, by which time she is supposed to have attained a realisation of her new position and the dignity pertaining thereto. After this she leads an ordinary life, spinning thread, weaving cloth, cooking tasty little honey cakes or other similar confections, which a girl takes out and sells in the market for a few cowries apiece; or she may exercise the profession of coiffeuse, a skilled trade of which a few only are mistress, for the intricacies of pads, fronts, and tails of false hair with the due admixture of rancid butter is indeed work for an artiste. It is so complicated that even the poorest woman does not venture to do her own hair, though she chooses the simplest style for which she need only pay sixpence, and leaves the glory of elaboration for her richer sisters, who can afford the shilling which is demanded. It is not, however, an extravagantly large item in the annual budget, for though the outlay is considerable in a country where the possession of £20 constitutes wealth, it is not incurred oftener than once a moon.

The routine of the day necessitates early rising, four being the usual hour, excepting of course for the old[1] or sick, and after Salla (prayer) at daybreak, which the women observe in their houses, they all have breakfast together of a sort of porridge and milk.

They work till midday, when the same meal is repeated, and rest till 2 P.M., after which they work till sundown, when the Salla is performed again, followed by the important meal of the day, for which all good things are kept. There is never more than one dish, however, and soup, fish, beans, meal, rice, dates, meat, or whatever it may be, are all mixed up together. Meat is expensive, so is rarely eaten, but the very rich sometimes have this compound of good things instead of porridge for lunch, though no one cares to eat much in the heat of the day. Such dainty morsels as honey cakes, or fruit, are eaten at odd hours; and water, the staple drink, is taken as thirst dictates, but not at meals.

All the women eat together. They sit round the pot in a circle, in strict order of precedence, counting from the right hand of the first wife, who helps herself and passes the pot round the table to the

[1] The natives of Nigeria frequently attain the Biblical three-score years and ten, and there are even centenarians.

subsequent wives, daughters, and foster-daughters, in order of age, dependants and slaves: hands only being used. The first or big wife alone may sit upright, while the others are obliged to crouch in her presence. The evening repast at an end, the children of the establishment go out to dance to the tom-tom, and their guardians sometimes have much trouble in chasing them in to bed at 9 o'clock. The women, who are great story-tellers, entertain each other till about eleven, when they too go to bed. They don't have much society, but they see a certain amount of those wives of their husband's great friends, whose influence he trusts, and they visit their mothers or foster-mothers every month; their sisters more rarely. They never accompany their husband on a visit, and should their friend's husband be in his house when they go in, it is etiquette for him to salute them and go out. Every one knows that a Mohammedan may have four wives: the first one is the "big" wife and has authority over the rest, advising them as to all internal arrangements, and granting or withholding permission for them to leave the compound, while she is responsible to no one but her husband. Pagan customs are, however, too various to describe under one heading. There are people amongst whom the first wife holds such absolute sway that she may even beat the junior wives, and is propitiated by presents from the parents of these ladies. It is more usual, however, for the head wife not to punish directly, but to report neglect of work to the husband. As a rule each wife has a house to herself, but amongst the Okpoto[1] the first wife alone enjoys this privilege, while the others are herded together in one hut, and she has moreover three lesser wives deputed to wait on her. Amongst other peoples there is equality between all the wives, and this is sometimes accompanied by a carefully laid down division of responsibilities, one wife having the care of the guinea-corn, another of the millet, and a third of the bean-bins.[2] The Munshi tribe encourage their women to trade, and they have evolved a system by which women are responsible for and own all food crops, while the men generally collect the sylvan products.

This example recalls us to the Nupe, for with them, as with many others, farming and trade form an important part of woman's work. In their case the cultivation of all products is carefully distributed between the sexes, and each works for his or her individual advantage, but first deducts what is necessary for the household consumption. The women collect the nuts from the shea-trees, prepare them for use, and reap the benefit of their sale. In the same way they

[1] Bassa Province.

[2] Yergum, Muri.

have exclusive rights over all trees, with the two notable exceptions of the oil-palm and kola. Then again, women own all root-crops that do not require transplanting, such as ochro and (the now very valuable) ground-nuts, but not cassava, sweet-potatoes, onions, &c., for it is not considered feminine to transplant, and what is due to man's work is man's property. The women, however, reserve the profitable privilege of selling everything, and, though they keep all that they make on their own crops, they likewise keep a fourth of what they receive for their husband's roots. They don't tell him so, but it is generally understood; and if a man should by any chance have such an honest wife that she gives him the whole of what she has received, he is so delighted that he at once spends it on a magnificent present for her, so he is not really any better off than if she had taken toll. Grain, however, a man not only grows, but may sell for himself—subject to limitations. His wives sow it, and when he has reaped it they garner it into their stores,—that is the extent of their work, but it establishes a claim, and each wife takes charge of so many bundles, which may not be sold without her consent; and of course she expects a present —if only a very little one— for her trouble. It is obvious from this that the women require to go abroad to effect their sales, and as the Nupe are great traders, they sometimes carry their goods to markets hundreds of miles away, when the husband usually acts as escort and the "big" wife stays at home to look after the house. It is a privilege and honour that she may do so, and proves to all the world that she has subordinates to do the work—so that, as a rule, she acquiesces willingly in the arrangement. But every now and again she is of an enterprising disposition and rejoices in the long tramps across country, in the river journeys, and perhaps a day in the crowded cars of the railway, and she is unwilling to forgo her outing and the incomparable pleasure of driving a hard bargain. Then her husband represents to her that the dignity of the household is lowered by her stooping to such toil, but if she persists, why, she gets her way. As will be supposed, the Nupe women become rich members of society, and are usually considerably wealthier than their husbands, whom they feed, and as a rule they take a pride in treating well. They have complete ownership over their savings, and though the husband inherits his wife's money if she has no children, she may at any time, even on her deathbed, call in a sufficiency of persons to bear witness that she leaves it to some one else. She does not, however, inherit from him, perhaps because his money would only serve to enrich another man, for, whatever her age or condition, no woman is allowed to remain single. Should she die without a husband there is no one to

bury her, and no house where her bones may be laid to rest, and that is regarded as a misery far transcending any worldly misfortune. Even were a charitable Mallam willing to perform the task of burial, public opinion would be against him, and in old days it was the "dogarai" (as the Emir's police were designated) who carried the body out to the bush: now the distasteful task is thrust upon the Government labourer. A widow must, however, out of respect for her late husband, remain five months in seclusion,—a five months that are particularly trying to her, for, besides her natural grief, she knows that if she were to fall sick it would be thought a suspicious circumstance that so much evil should rest in her neighbourhood, and that it would be hard to get another husband. This period of mourning is therefore one of terror for the poor widows, who each prays fervently that she may keep her health throughout it, so that she may marry promptly when the term is up. The five months ended she discards her white robes, takes off her sandals again in the usual way, and once more "plants her head," to use an expression for hair-dressing that was adopted by an English scholar of her nation. She is now free to marry whom she will, and is permitted forty days in which to choose her husband, at the end of which time she must be wed. She is not likely to have such a good time again as she had with her first husband, for those who have been already married are not regarded as quite so peculiarly the wives of their new husbands; and though by law and supposition they are equal, a man will give his own wives more presents and privileges than he will to widows,—so long, of course, as he is quite safe from detection.

While the Mohammedan widow mourns her five months and has comparative liberty to choose whom she will subsequently marry, the ordinary pagan system requires immediate remarriage to a specified relation, so that she does not pass out of the family,—usually the husband's brother or son (not of course her own son). There are an infinite number of variations to this custom, and in some tribes a certain amount of licence is allowed the widow, as, for instance, where she is bound to marry either a brother or uncle of the deceased, but may choose which. She signifies her choice a month after the death of the deceased in this manner. Each of these, possibly very elderly, gentlemen brews a pot of beer and puts it in her house. Then they go out and she takes up her post at the threshold. One by one they come and ask leave to fetch their beer, and to each rejected candidate she hands out the pot, but the favoured suitor is allowed to pass inside.[1] There are exceptions to

[1] Kugamma, Yola.

the rule of prompt remarriage, some people thinking it seemly to mourn for two or three years,[1] while others are permitted to return to their own people and only marry again by their own wish.[2]

When it is the wife who dies, due mourning is observed for her also, and for the same period. The Nupe widower wears white robes, but not too white, for a little dirt relieves the brightness. For the first seven days he remains in his house without stirring out, and, as in the case of Job, is surrounded by friends and relations, who sit with him proffering their consolations from dawn till dusk, and it is forty days before he resumes ordinary life. The mourning is no sham one, and the custom of burial within the compound, which gives a sense of companionship with the departed, is of very real importance to the bereaved—in fact, the dead seem to share in the daily life of the living in a way that it is difficult for Europeans to understand. Indeed, we aliens find many things hard to understand, though gradually we come to realise that a definite philosophy, and that often a very wise one, dictates each observance. As a newcomer to the country one's spirit overflows with sympathy for the woman who has no choice but to marry, and who, should her husband be a person of any consideration, must share him with two or three others. One only gradually gets to know that she for her part feels boundless pity for the English woman who has to fulfil all the arduous duties of a wife single-handed, and that she cannot believe that there exists a member of her sex so insane as to prefer to live without a husband. As a stranger, one thinks the women of Nigeria are downtrodden; but as a resident, one soon learns that the pagan chief was right in his dictum, "Women are a very strong folk."

OLIVE TEMPLE.

[1] Mumye, Muri.

[2] Kona, Yola.

CHANG: HIS BELL.

THIS is the story of Chang, his bell; and of John Fitchett, Lieutenant; and of Janet Grey, now Mrs Fitchett.

About 2000 years ago, Chang made the bell. He recorded this fact, ideographically, together with the date and dynasty, on the bell: and added a neat couplet, informing posterity that "Though one man may make me tremble and speak, forty shall not move me,"—or words to that effect. And this was approximately true, as will be seen.

From the year of the bell's birth to 1900 A.D. is a hiatus, pregnant (if a hiatus can be so) with potentialities for the writer of Fiction, to whom I shall generously make a present of them all. In 1900 the owner of Chang's bell was in a pretty stew. The Foreign Devils were undoubtedly setting towards Pekin where the bell dwelt, and it was necessary to hide it. With immense labour it was got from the Temple of Heaven to a much humbler residence—to wit, a sort of outhouse known in the East (no one knows why) as a "Godown." This was used for storing felt, and in the felt Chang's bell was buried up to its neck, and so left. It was considered safe enough there; for what Foreign Devils would want felt for loot? In this conclusion, however, the owner of Chang's bell made grievous error.

We will leave the bell here and go back ten years or so to the lowest form-room of one of our public schools, where we find Master John Fitchett and a friend cooking in a tin lid the ill-plucked carcase of a sparrow over the gas, and later, eating it with immense gusto. At that age John looked as callow and as embryonic and as unpromising as the stupidest boy in the lowest form of a great school can look. There was, however, about him even then a benign expression of imperturbable good-humour which he still wears, and which fools sometimes take for foolishness.

Five years later John had lost his callowness, and was called by every one "Old John," or "Old Fitchett," an adjective never yet put to a proper name that has not inspired others with respect or affection. He had taken five years to grow on his public, and when he left school he left a blank not easily filled, as his house-master and several others who had had to do with him soon realised.

A crammer with infinite difficulty pushed him into the Service: and when I think how often crammers have helped to officer our regiments with just such good stuff as John is, I bless and do not curse them.

Janet Grey and John had come to an "understanding" at the respective ages of twelve and fifteen. Five years later this arrangement still stood,

and as John was about to start for the East, and neither of them had a farthing, they decided it was time to place things on a definite footing, and so became engaged. They made up their minds to a nine-year wait, unless, as Miss Janet remarked, her Uncle George would die, or do something. John reproved her for ghoulishness; and there was a slight coldness, not improved by Janet a little later alluding to John as "Godlike" to his face. And she made things no better by explaining that she meant one of the heathen kind, spelt with a small "G." This tiny rift was soon mended, and never reopened; in due course he sailed for India. Here he was not received with acclamations by his regiment. It took him two or three years to grow on his brother officers, and to make them realise that a man not particularly good at anything apparently, may yet be uncommonly good for a great many things. There was some talk at first about clearing him out into some other regiment (what should we do without these bins or receptacles for our out-castings?), but that soon died. He was described in his confidential reports as "painstaking and hard-working."

Certain regiments possess a box marked "Mobilisation." It is locked, and contains many dull and secret matters enabling a regiment to go, at the shortest notice, on active service, and one of the secrets is the name of the officer who does not accompany the regiment into the field, but who is left behind to command the depôt. Theoretically, the selection for this uncoveted office confers no discredit on the nominee, for it requires a good officer to run a depôt well. But here theory scarcely jumps with practice.

In 1900 came rumours of trouble in China, then definite announcements; then more rumours as to the strength of the force going, and more definite announcements. Lastly, a very great many more rumours as to what regiments were going. Nearly every regiment had it on the best authority that it was one to go. John's corps said and believed as all the rest did, only a little more so. But the contents of the box remained secret, and there was no Fatima to open it.

John said little at any time; on occasions like the present he said nothing. But the fear of his name being chosen for the depôt knocked at his heart with fingers of deadliest ice. He took this so heavily that he went off his sleep, and looked like making certain of being left behind by going sick. The orders for mobilisation came soon after, and hot on their heels and just in time to be left at the depôt arrived Bunbury-Brown from England, whence, after abundant cabling, he had rushed out at his own expense in order to rejoin. John's nightmare rolled away amid this less fortunate brother officer's curses. These were the heavier, as had he

not been in such a hurry to throw up his leave, he would in due course have been ordered out and his journey done at his country's expense. As it was, not a penny!

. . . . . .

The allied forces had reached and occupied Pekin. Abroad was the spirit of grab. Good regiments made it regimental grab: a very few bad ones made an individual business of it. Their officers buried loot in their tents and sat on it, glaring suspiciously at brother officers doing the same thing. That was only just at first. Then began the regular official auctions, where those who had ready money bought those beautiful silks and embroideries so much in evidence at home after the war.

With all this we have nothing to do, and are only concerned in telling the process by which John and his bell came together. He had in some way become connected with Mounted Infantry, and his horses having lost condition, he went out one day in search of anything that would serve to stuff saddles. He came to a Godown, whose broken door showed that he was not the first searcher there. Looking in he saw just what he wanted—felts in any quantity, and, on closer inspection, felts of such closeness and thickness that they were almost as good as numnah.

John began to load felts on to the light cart that the fatigue party had brought with them. A few minutes' work and he had all that he wanted; but he bethought him that his friends, the 40th Light Cavalry, might also be wanting to stuff their saddles. So he continued loading, and—came on a hard yellow thing. Further removal showed this to be a huge brass ring, and a little later the bell itself—Chang's bell—was gradually exposed to view.

"It looks a beastly heavy old brass thing," thought John, "but it will make a fine trophy for the Mess. I'll take it along." This was easily said, but the party of ten with him could not even move it. Thirty more men were sent for, and then with the utmost efforts they got the bell out of the Godown and on to a light country cart. Through this it immediately sank, and with a dull clang sat on the road. A more sensible man than John would have left it there. Instead, a much stronger cart was obtained and the bell eventually removed to the Mess. John's ideas came a little slow, but he seldom altered his mind.

A thrifty Mess secretary was busy with some hundreds of pounds' worth of Mess stores which he was laying in against the winter. He regarded the bell very coldly.

"I've brought a bell for the Mess, Jenkins," said John.

"I see it," said Jenkins.

"It will make rather a fine trophy, I think," said John.

"Fine and large, and rather too large at that," replied Jenkins.

"Well," said John, "where'll I off-load it, Jenkins?"

"Oh, anywhere out of the way. I'm busy,—suit yourself."

That night the Mess, with all its thrifty laid-in stores, was utterly burnt down. Not a thing remained—except the bell. That took a lot of salving. It fell on one of its rescuers and crushed him badly.

In due course the regiment got its homeward route. There was some slight attempt to leave the bell, but John, mildly persistent, overcame opposition, and it sailed for India with its possessors. Not without mischief, however. While being slung on board the transport it got out of control and crashed into a horse-box, killing a pony. Every one was pretty weary of it before it was finally installed in the verandah of the Indian Mess-house.

It rose into a little, very temporary, favour during house warmings, because strangers stopped and admired its bulk, and never failed to say, "But how *did* you get it here?" Little they realised how white and elephantine a thing it really was.

Just as the regiment was settled in, and just as everything had been unpacked and laid down and hung up and spread out, the Mess was again completely burnt down. A thatched roof accelerated matters, and in that fire all that was of real or of sentimental value was utterly consumed, and there was much of both. The bell being of no value of any kind whatever, was somehow the one thing saved. In return it crushed a sepoy's foot so completely that he had to be invalided out of the Service, without even the slender gratuity granted to a man receiving injury on a military duty.

It is not to be wondered at that when the first tears had been shed and grief gave place to resentment, a very hostile attitude came to be adopted towards the bell. Without being superstitious, still it seemed odd that the Mess should have been twice burnt down since its arrival. Every one was sick of it. Mr Chang's handiwork meanwhile lolled blatantly on its vast side, hard by the blackened ruins of the Mess-house. If it had possessed a tongue (Chang's larger line in bells seems to have been rung only from the outside), it looked as if the bell would have hammered tocsins of triumph at being the most hateful thing in the Mess, and the only one saved from the fire.

John was told to take the bell away; that the Mess completely and utterly disowned it, and could no longer stand the sight of it. Its presence in the bare, unhomely, plateless, furniture-less building then being used as a Mess-house was quite unthinkable.

It was while he was wandering one morning round his bell, and wondering what to do with it, that he noticed—it was lying on its side—right up in the apex of the

interior, something that no one without a good share of mother-wit would have looked at twice had he seen it at all. The bell from exposure, lack of cleaning, and scorching, had now assumed a dull, slightly gangrenous complexion. It was a flaw in this that attracted John's attention. Some one recently, probably during the previous night, had gouged out a neat little shaving, an inch in length, and showing bright clean metal underneath. That was all. But it led to a train of thought which John began to follow up that very night. He was not at Mess that night, nor the next, nor the next. He was watching the bell, and to sit through long nights on the strength of a surmise built on a little deduction requires determination.

On the third night, shortly after midnight, without preliminary sound of footsteps, a gentle, rasping sound became audible to the watcher. It came from the bell, and John let it go on for just half an hour by the watch, after which he switched on his electrical bull's-eye, and after a slight pause walked up to the bell. His first care was to examine the wood ashes which had been laid down round it. By these he saw that only one person had come and gone. The bell itself showed at first inspection nothing, but the light presently scintillated on some bright metal dust lying on a cloth, seemingly placed to catch it. Immediately above this, on the rim of the bell, the light now showed two clean, very fine fret-saw cuts.

John's long vigil had not been in vain.

Things now looked important enough for a little assistance, and during the rest of the night John, his orderly, and a servant, armed, kept watch by turn; and the dogs, which had been hitherto carefully kept away, shared the vigil.

Next morning a fatigue-party took the bell to John's bungalow, but he said nothing to anybody (who happened to see them) about the saw-cuts.

The same day he sent a small registered parcel to the Mint. On receipt of a reply a week later, he walked to the local Bank and had a talk with the Manager, and showed him the answer received that day. The Manager went back with him and viewed the bell, and the same night appeared an ancient worker in metals. To him John confided the fact that he believed the bell to be possessed, and that he wanted a good wedge of it to send to the Government exorcist to make certain. The wedge was duly cut, sent away, and in another week John was informed that his bell contained 30 per cent of gold, 15 per cent of copper, and that the rest was an alloy which would count for something but not much. Further, that the Bank — the wedge had been sent to its headquarters—was prepared to give full weight value for the bell, less 5 per cent on delivery.

John lost no time. It was on the cards that the man who had first sampled the metal, and then came again for more, might perhaps have another try for so big a prize. So every reasonable precaution was taken. The ancient metal worker was again summoned, and told that the bell had in very fact been found to be possessed, and that no less a fate awaited it than burial far out at sea. That it was to be speedily cut into chunks suitable to purposes of transit, and that the work was to be done after dark. The old man undertook to do this in six days. The result of each night's work was removed to the Bank, taken over, weighed, and a receipt given. On the seventh day Chang's bell was no more; and on the eleventh John received a cheque for between £14,000 and £15,000. It was made out in rupees, and amounted to Rs. 217,500 of them. This sounds ever so much better than its equivalent in pounds.

This is not a love tale, or I might have said something more of Miss Janet Grey, and something less of the bell. It must be taken for granted, therefore, that she had always been very much in John's life, and that she now shared his thoughts pretty equally with the bell—and not unnaturally, for when the bell went into the melting-pot the last of the obstacles to a speedy marriage went with it. No one in the regiment knew of the engagement. For one so young as John such a thing was quite beyond the limits of decency or common-sense. When, however, he handled the cheque, but not before, he wrote to Janet and told her that they need wait no longer. That letter was joyfully posted at 4 P.M. on mail day: the mail left at 5 P.M. Five minutes before that hour the sun still shone and all was well.

Then Conscience asked a simple question — Was John doing quite the straight thing? "Certainly," replied John. "I gave the bell to the Mess: the Mess gave it back to me." "Under a misapprehension," murmured Conscience.

A less honest heart might have parleyed longer. Not so John. In a moment he was on his bicycle pedalling for dear life. The letter-box at the Mess, when he got there, he found cleared. He dashed off to the Post Office, not far distant, and as he neared it saw the orderly diving for letters into his bag and beginning to drop them into the box. John's mad bellows caused the man to look up and pause. Next moment John had flung himself off his bicycle, seized the pile of letters still unposted, and amongst them found his own.

It was a quarterly Mess meeting. There was the usual circle of officers, some bored, some not; the usual reading of minutes, the usual rather bored inspection of accounts, and the usual growl that since no one drank anything these days the Mess balance credit was in a bad way and only slightly

ameliorated by the cigarette revenue. The usual discussions were started and suggestions made, speedily smothered by the usual side-issues and irrelevancies. And the Colonel was about to apply the guillotine with the usual formula of, "Well, I think we've talked enough for one day, haven't we?" When John said, "There is just one thing more—about that bell." Several of the audience yawned, one of them groaned slightly. The Colonel said icily that they had all understood that the last had been heard of the bell.

"In a way you have heard the last of it, sir," said John, "and in a way . . ."

"So far as I recollect," said the Colonel, appealing to the rest, "the Mess washed its hands of the bell and gave it back to you!"

"Yes," said every one.

"And I think, then," continued the Colonel, "that there can be nothing more to be said," and every one hastily rose.

"Yes, but there is something more to be said," said John. "The bell had gold in it."

"Ah! yes, yes," said the Colonel, veering towards the door. "They all do—like the Burmese Budhas and their rubies. A myth, my dear Fitchett, a pure myth, I do assure you. Send a bit to the assayer and see whether I'm right or not."

"I've done that, sir," said John, following him and flourishing the cheque, "and you are wrong to the tune of more than two lacs. Here's the cheque for the money. I gave the bell to the Mess, and of course it always remained Mess property."

The cheque was accepted with the utmost bonhomie and good feeling. A Mess can swallow words that perhaps an individual can not: and in a moment it had forgiven all the bad things the bell had done, and forgotten all the abuse that had been heaped on it, and was altogether most magnanimous and nice about it,—besides being quite, quite grateful to John.

The Mess meeting was prolonged another hour or so, while John told with some prolixity the truth, but not the whole truth, about the bell. No one knowing anything about Janet Gray, and John not telling them about her or the post-office incident, of course they really missed the whole point and gist of the matter. But this no one realised. There was the cheque, and what more could any one want?

John being that sort of man, told the story in just that sort of way as to make each hearer think that personally, had it been he and not John who wandered round the bell that morning, the gouging would have been noticed, and the same line of action taken all through, just as had been done by John.

So the meeting broke up, and John went his way, not in very great spirits, but thankful that he had managed things so that he had come out of them without any credit or

applause or embarrassing gratitude. But he smiled wanly when he thought of the Colonel and his determination to get right up to his neck in it, in his refusal of the bell.

A committee sat, and had no difficulty in calling it the "Bell Fund" (mark you, not the "Fitchett Fund"), but it found a great deal of difficulty in protecting the fund from a possible raid on it by Government. Legal assistance was invoked, and the fund made into a trust, and of course no Government can lay hands on a trust. Also various *chevaux-de-frise* and hedges and ditches were thrown up around the fund in the most legal and incomprehensible language possible. Even in the event of a possible disbandment an æon or so hence (an unthinkable possibility to the regiment, but the law has to think in æons), the fund was rendered immune from any murrain or blight that Government might cast on it. And if you want to know of the many useful, ornamental, and charitable objects to which the bell fund is parent, you must ask the regiment itself.

A few years ago, Miss Janet Grey and her god—of the small "G" (or heathen) variety—completed their nine-year wait and were duly married. Uncle George was most disappointing throughout. His wedding present consisted in hearty congratulations on their prudence in not hurrying things: and he said he would send them something soon, but never did. Whether Mrs Fitchett approves of John's conduct with regard to the bell, I leave you to judge: she is much too cryptic for me. What she always says is—

"It was just like that old dear to go and give that cheque to the Mess."

X.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

A HUNDRED YEARS SINCE—THE CENTENARY OF 'WAVERLEY'—AN ANONYMOUS MASTERPIECE—SCOTT'S COURAGE IN ADVERSITY—THE INFLUENCE OF THE WAVERLEY NOVELS IN FRANCE—AND IN ENGLAND—THE OPINION OF HAZLITT AND COLERIDGE—JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN—AT THE COLONIAL OFFICE—A POLITICAL VISIONARY.

THE year 1814 will ever be memorable in the history of Europe. It saw the end of Napoleon's domination. Disaster overtook that unconquered conqueror, even where he held himself strongest. Blücher repulsed the French troops at Laon. Wellington crossed the Adour and won the battle of Toulouse. The Emperor himself was compelled to leave Fontainebleau for the island of Elba. There were disturbances in Italy and Spain. Norway, after a sharp campaign, was compelled to acknowledge the King of Sweden as her own. Pope Pius the Seventh returned at last to Rome and reassumed the proud title of Christ's Vicar on Earth. The British Fleet was beaten on Lake Champlain, and the Treaty of Ghent put an end to an unfortunate war. At last, with Louis XVIII.'s return to Paris, the world seemed entering upon an era of peace. The annals of the time are packed with events, and quick with the hope of better things. Yet there is one episode of 1814 whose importance escaped the vigilance of the world. In July, just a century ago, 'Waverley' was published, and if only a sense of proportion had inspired the prophets, they would have foreseen that the appearance of this one simple romance was destined to exercise a greater influence on humankind than the fall of Napoleon.

Its author, with the humility of true greatness, did not take a grave view of its possibilities. Written some years before, it had lain hidden in an old desk at Abbotsford. There it might have remained for many a long day, had not Scott "happened to want some fishing-tackle for the use of a guest." It came into his mind to search the half-forgotten writing-desk, and "in looking for lines and flies the long-lost manuscript presented itself." The adventure is altogether characteristic of Sir Walter. An accident revealed the unfinished masterpiece, and a few weeks' toil brought it to completion. When it was done he thought little enough of it. He had far too many interests to submit to the tyranny of arrogance. He was incapable of overrating what he did or of forgetting that he was a man of the world as well as of letters. What he said of 'Waverley' was undoubtedly sincere. "I do not invite my fair readers,"

he wrote, "whose sex and impatience give them the greatest right to complain of old-fashioned politics, into a flying chariot drawn by hippogriffs, or moved by enchantment. Mine is a humble English post-chaise, drawn upon four wheels, and keeping his Majesty's highway. Such as dislike the vehicle may leave it at the next halt, and wait for the conveyance of Prince Hussein's tapestry, or Malek the Weaver's flying sentry-box." Though Sir Walter thought his post-chaise humble and English, it was enchanted none the less. It went round the globe as swiftly and easily as though Prince Hussein's tapestry carried it, and the man of genius who held its reins was speedily hailed as the Wizard of the North.

That he should at first have suppressed the name which should have stood upon the title-page was reasonable enough. "My original motive," said he, "for publishing the work anonymously was the consciousness that it was an experiment on the public taste which might very probably fail, and therefore there was no occasion to take on myself the personal risk of discomfiture." When an immediate triumph made this motive of no effect, Scott persisted in secrecy because it was his humour. He had no longer the desire "to float amidst the conversation of men." That which the world can give of glory was already his. "Of literary fame," he confesses, "whether merited or undeserved, I had already as much as contented a mind more ambitious than mine; and in entering into this new contest for reputation, I might be said rather to endanger what I had than to have any considerable chance of acquiring more. I was affected, too, by none of those motives which at an earlier period of life would doubtless have operated upon me. My friendships were formed — my place in society fixed—my life had attained its middle course. My condition in society was higher, perhaps, than I deserved, certainly as high as I wished, and there was scarce any degree of literary success which could have greatly altered or improved my personal condition. I was not, therefore, touched by the spur of ambition." Is it possible to imagine a more clear and candid exposition of a simple theme than that?

Moreover, Scott knew well enough that the anonymity was little better than a convention. He might deceive "the general reader." He could not hope to escape notice among his friends. Nor indeed did he escape notice. The truth is that the Waverley Novels could have been written by Scott and by Scott alone. "The number of coincidences"—again it is Scott who speaks — "which necessarily existed between narratives recounted, modes of expression and opinions broached in these Tales, and such as were used by the Author in the intercourse of private life,

must have been far too great to permit any of my familiar acquaintances to doubt the identity betwixt their friend and the Author of 'Waverley'; and I believe they were all morally convinced of it." Convinced of it they assuredly were, and the conviction went far beyond the circle of familiar acquaintance. Byron, for instance, had no doubt as to the authorship of 'Waverley,' and even the Quarterly Reviewer, who could not claim the poet's literary intuition, had little difficulty in piercing Scott's secret.

Thereafter, with a profusion which has not a parallel in the history of literature, Scott gave his masterpieces to the world. In health and sickness, in wealth and adversity, he set his imagination to work. His toil, like his conception of romance, was heroic. There is no nobler episode in the whole range of biography than Scott's struggle to repay the debts incurred by another. As he was incapable of shirking the burden, so he was incapable of complaint. He knew his powers failing, yet he remained with all his ancient bravery at his desk. To outdo the pathos of his Journal would be impossible, impossible also to match its plain courage. Scott neither exaggerated nor overlooked the agony of his state. "I have been very ill," he wrote towards the end of 1831, "and if not quite unable to write, I have been unfit to do so. I have wrought, however, at two Waverley things, but not well, and, what is worse, past mending. A total prostration of bodily strength is my chief complaint. I cannot walk half a mile. There is, besides, a mental confusion, with the extent of which I am not perhaps fully acquainted. I am perhaps setting. I am myself inclined to think so, and like a day that has been admired as a fine one, the light of it sets down amid mists and storms. I neither fear nor regret the approach of death, if it is coming. I would compound for a little pain instead of this heartless madness of mind, which renders me incapable of anything rational."

"I am perhaps setting." Here is all the misery of the soldier, who must lay aside his sword. Death Scott faced without a murmur. The heaviest burden of debt he would gladly bear were he "the Walter Scott" he once was. In seventeen years he had written the long series of romances known as the Waverley Novels, and a vast deal besides. He had breathed into an outworn world the romantic spirit. He was not the first of his line. The movement which he inaugurated, all unconsciously, was begun before his time. Gray had shown in his odes something of what to-day is called the Celtic inspiration. Percy in his 'Reliques' had reminded the world that there lay half-hidden from its gaze a great wealth of popular poetry. And none with finer energy than Scott had carried on the researches thus happily begun by the Bishop of Dromore.

Then again, Walpole in his 'Castle of Otranto' had done his best to make the flesh of mankind creep. In brief, all the conditions were favourable to the rebirth of romance, and it was to the genius of Scott that Europe owed her vigorous reaction against what seemed the servitude of a weary classicism.

That Scott should have made a conquest of his own country was but natural. His victory is remarkable, because it extended to the uttermost corners of Europe. His triumph, in truth, was far greater than Napoleon's, for he has lost no inch of conquered territory. It is this permanence which makes the publication of 'Waverley' the most noteworthy event of 1814. It changed the minds of men far more effectively than did the fall of Napoleon. When the novelist visited Paris in 1815 he entered the city as one whose genius had given him the rights of a free citizen. 'Waverley,' already translated, had become the foundation of a school. Hugo and Balzac were the acknowledged pupils of one who had never looked beyond himself for the results of his work. The culmination of the romantic school in 1830 was due in great measure to the shining example of Sir Walter. Without his influence Gautier would never have shone resplendent in a red waistcoat. Without him the long-haired, decorative poets, who called themselves *les jeunes-France*, would never have drunk to the objects of their exotic loves from human skulls. In brief, the whole Romantic Movement of France was dominated by his grandeur. Not only did Hugo gladly acknowledge his inspiration, but without him we should not have known the immortal musketeers. In England, his fate was of equal glory, but with a difference. Imitators he had in hundreds, now long ago forgotten; he founded no school. It is not our habit to combine; we think very little of cliques and cenacles. But we have at times the gift of admiration, and Scott exercised this gift for us as none since Shakespeare had done. He appealed with equal power and insistence to all classes. The fastidious critic vied with the uninstructed reader in enthusiasm. No writer had ever won a universal popularity as did Scott. No writer had had the faculty of attaching his creations in the bonds of friendship to the simple folk which read about them. The books were eagerly bought and eagerly read wherever the English language was known. And the critics made as easy a surrender to Scott's imagination as the people. Hazlitt, Radical as he was, suppressed his anti-heroics in the presence of the master. He exulted in the Waverley Novels with a candour which did him infinite honour. He wrote of them with the gusto which he brought always to the contemplation of sound literature. For him Scott was the one modern who might compete upon equal terms with the ancients.

He praised him for precisely those qualities which you would have feared he would have deplored. He welcomed him as an aristocratic influence in an "ultra-Radical" age. He praised him for "emancipating the mind from petty, narrow, and bigoted prejudices." When the fool blamed Sir Walter's speed and profusion, Hazlitt insisted that the fecundity of his pen was no less admirable than his felicity. He recalls the noble procession of men and women which marches through the Waverley Novels, and thus concludes in the true vein: "What a list of names! What a host of associations! What a thing is human life! What a power is that of genius! What a world of thought and feeling is thus rescued from oblivion! How many hours of heartfelt satisfaction has our author given to the gay and thoughtless! How many sad hearts has he soothed in pain and solitude! It is no wonder that the public repay with lengthened applause and gratitude the pleasure they receive. He writes as fast as they can read, and he does not write himself down. He is always in the public eye, and we do not tire of him. His worst is better than any other person's best. . . . His works are almost like a new edition of human nature. This is indeed to be an author!" It has often been said that political prejudice dominated the literary criticism of the early nineteenth century. For once, at any rate, Hazlitt rose superior to the habit of his time.

Nor was he content with rhapsody. He gave a just reason for the faith that was in him. He made the first, and perhaps the best, attempt to pierce the secret of Scott's success. "Sir Walter," he writes, "has found out (oh, rare discovery!) that facts are better than fiction; that there is no romance like the romance of real life; and that if we can but arrive at what men feel, do, and say in striking and singular situations, the result will be 'more lively, audible, and full of vent' than the fine-spun cobwebs of the brain. With reverence be it spoken, he is like the man who, having to imitate the squeaking of a pig upon the stage, brought the animal under his coat with him. Our author has conjured up the actual people he has to deal with, or as much as he could get of them, in 'their habits as they lived.' He has ransacked old chronicles, and poured the contents upon his page; he has squeezed out musty records; he has consulted wayfaring pilgrims, bedrid sibyls; he has invoked the spirits of the air; he has conversed with the living and the dead, and let them tell their story their own way; and by borrowing of others has enriched his own genius with everlasting variety, truth, and freedom. . . . He is only the amanuensis of truth and history. It is impossible to say how fine his writings in consequence are, unless we could

describe how fine nature is." There is insight as well as generosity in this passage, which may still stand as a right and just appreciation of the Waverley Novels.

To Coleridge Scott was not merely a writer; he was a constant solace. "When I am very ill indeed," he said, "I can read Scott's novels, and they are almost the only books I can then read. I cannot at such times read the Bible; my mind reflects upon it, but I can't bear the open page." Lamb, alone among his friends, regarded the Waverley Novels with impatience, though he willingly submitted to the charm of their author. Always loyal to the traditions of a Cockney, he had no natural love of romantic scenery. As little did he like new books and fresh plots. Were he in search of amusement, then Fielding was at his elbow, and in 'Tom Jones' he knew precisely where he was. To understand the personages of Scott's magnificent drama was for him as difficult a feat as to make new friends. And he remained most happily in the ancient ways. For the rest all men joined in applauding the Great Unknown. Young and old, Whig and Tory, Radical and Aristocrat, were of one mind, and Sir Walter speedily became the most popular writer in Great Britain.

His success was justly won. He revivified the past as none other had ever done. He clothed the bones of history with the flesh of reality. He made yesterday one with to-day. Even in admitting no sacrifice to truth, he set the heroes of old resolutely upon their feet before us. James I. in 'The Fortunes of Nigel,' Louis XI. in 'Quentin Durward,' are portraits which no research could better. Scott has not travelled one inch beyond the facts. He has said nothing without the warrant of the chronicles. Yet his imagination has helped him to paint in such colours as are beyond the reach of the painstaking historian. Not that Scott neglected the proper sources of history. Until he began to write he followed the same path to which all the dry-as-dusts adhered. Only he knew how to transform the material thus patiently gathered. When he took his pen in hand he wrote not merely what his mind knew, but what he saw with the eye of his fancy. If you would unravel the process, compare the stuff out of which his James I., for instance, is composed, with the finished portrait. Or, having marked the life and vigour of the scenes in Alsatia, read the dull comedy of Shadwell, upon which they are founded. And when you have made the comparison, you are still remote from understanding. A profound knowledge of physics will not increase the joy which the vision of a rainbow gives to the soul of a curious child.

In calling history to life, in bringing back the ideals of chivalry to a tired world, Scott re-created, so to say, his native country. Scotland appeared once more the veritable home

of romance that it is. At a touch of the wizard's wand it became a place of pilgrimage and of common resort. The grandsons of those who saw in the country north of the Tweed the home of dirt and squalor, opened their eyes and ears to the legends of Prince Charlie, or discovered the truth about Montrose and Claverhouse in the pages of what they delighted to call "the Scotch novels." For good or evil the tourist was summoned to Scotland by the trumpet of Sir Walter's patriotism, and the tourist has persisted ever since in his resolve to seek the north and its associations. And with the teaching of Sir Walter we have completely revised our opinions of scenery. There was a time when mountain and moorland appeared barbarous to the cultivated eye, when the traveller loved no scenes so much as those which betrayed the shaping hand of man, when the trim parterre and neat fountain seemed to exceed in loveliness the hillside and the cataract. To the change of taste others contributed. Gray and the authors of the wonder-stones played their part. But the adoration of mountains was more vividly suggested to the world by Scott than by the most eloquent of his predecessors, and while we give him credit for the larger, broader view, we cannot hold him responsible for the foolish excesses of those mountaineers who affect to believe that nothing but death and stagnation can dwell in the plains.

It is too early to measure the loss which the world has sustained by the death of Joseph Chamberlain. Even though for some years he has looked upon politics from a distance, he is yet involved in the net of ancient controversies. That history will set him upon the lofty pedestal reserved for those who serve their country faithfully, we have no doubt whatever. The time has not yet come to find his place among the statesmen of our time. We can do no more, at this hour, than fire a salute of honour over his grave.

His life was devoted faithfully to the public service. Never for a moment did he harbour any other ambition than to do what he could to advance the community in which he lived. In Birmingham he served the best apprenticeship that statesman could desire. He learned from the conduct of a city the proper means of governing a great country. As Mayor of Birmingham he mastered the lessons of administration, which were invaluable to him in the larger sphere of imperial politics. His untiring energy would not allow him to shirk or to overlook anything. He managed his caucus, when the time came, with the same thoroughness wherewith he controlled municipal affairs. He left nothing to chance, and knew that forethought and courage were always necessary to success. A professed democrat, he was convinced that it was a

leader's first duty to be autocratic. If he appealed to the democracy, as he was bound to do, he took care to dominate it when it had answered his appeal. He had no sympathy with those Radicals of a later breed, who pretend that the highest duty of the statesman is to obey the people without thought or question. Such a pretence was always absurd in the eyes of Joseph Chamberlain,—a masterful man and a born leader of men.

When he emerged from Birmingham and took his place on the larger stage of Westminster, it was natural that he should have espoused the Liberal cause. His early associations were Liberal; Liberal also were his connections in Birmingham. He had gladly acknowledged the leadership of John Bright, and had grown up in the stricter sect of Cobdenism. But no sooner did he hold office for the first time in 1880 than he gave proof of his independent spirit. The Board of Trade was allotted to him, and he refused to make it a sinecure. With equal energy he refused to look upon the Empire as a sort of makeshift, which was best handled when it gave no trouble to anybody. Even at the outset Bright recognised him for a jingo, and he was never of these cynical opportunists who thought that our wisest course in Egypt, which lay on the highroad to India, was to "butcher and bolt." Indeed, no sooner did he hold office than he began gradually to find himself. He was under fifty, and still sensitive to new impressions. Those who reproach him with changing his opinions after his severance from Gladstone understood Chamberlain as little as they understand politics. There is no peculiar virtue in consistency. To persist in what you have discovered to be an error is a crime of insincerity, which it is very difficult to condone. In politics especially is a change of view permissible and natural. The young politician is given a brief, so to say, by his parents or his friends, and finds it easy enough to fortify it with arguments. Gladstone himself was already middle-aged when first he assumed the leadership of the Liberal party, and it says very little for the good sense of the Radicals that they should have continually charged Chamberlain with apostacy. There is no apostacy in growth, and the loyalty which Chamberlain felt was to his country and his honour, not to the accidental leader of a few brief years.

Indeed the courage of open-mindedness, the faculty of learning, were always among his greatest qualities. No sooner had he left Birmingham than he saw the needs of the Empire in another perspective. He discovered presently that there was no room for parochialism in the government of a great country. Refusing to follow Gladstone in his sudden conversion to Parnellism, he made the cause of the Union his own, and did as much as any one in the fierce campaign of disruption to preserve the United Kingdom intact.

In force of argument, in lucidity of exposition, the speeches delivered by Chamberlain were unequalled in the long controversy. He fought Gladstone with the passionate conviction of one who set imperial interests high above the intrigues and manœuvres of a party. "Since I have been in public affairs," said he, "I have called myself, I think not altogether without reason, a Radical. But that title has never prevented me from giving great consideration to Imperial interests. I have cared for the honour, and the influence, and the integrity of the Empire, and it is because I believe these things are now in danger that I have felt myself called upon to make the greatest sacrifice than any public man can make." If he was superb in attack, he called the argument always to a high plane. It was not for a paltry motive that he opposed with all his strength and eloquence the policy of Home Rule. "Gentlemen," he said in a memorable speech, "your ancestors have met great difficulties and dangers, and have confronted them successfully. They have arrested the tyranny of kings; they have borne without flinching the terrors of a persecuting Church; they have again and again rolled back the tide of foreign invasion from our shores; they have overcome the most powerful combination of their foes; and now will you, their descendants,—you, upon whose shoulders the burden of their empire has fallen,—will you be so poor-spirited as to break up your ancient constitution, to destroy your venerable Parliament, and to surrender your well-earned supremacy to the vile and ignoble force of anarchy and disorder?"

Such was the spirit of Imperialism in which he helped to defeat Gladstone's attempt to dismember the United Kingdom. When the struggle was over, it was clear to all that the Union had been preserved largely by the energy and eloquence of Joseph Chamberlain. To sail in the same ship again with those who were once his colleagues would have been plainly impossible, even if Chamberlain had not drifted far away from his ancient moorings. It was but natural that he should put his genius for administration at the service of Lord Salisbury. Once more he rose to the full height of his opportunity. He brought to the Colonial Office an aptitude for business and a quick understanding, to which that neglected post had long been a stranger. It was in no narrow sense that he interpreted his duties. "We believe in the expansion of the Empire," he said, "in its legitimate development. We are not afraid to take upon ourselves the burden and the responsibility which attach to a great governing race." In the years which followed, Chamberlain had abundant occasion for proving the faith and the courage which were his. He was of those who rise with an emergency, who are not afraid to speak the truth

and to confront their enemies. If we look back to the years which preceded the South African War we can measure only too easily how far we have fallen behind in the race. We did not then accept with an amiable smile the insults of our foes. When the German Emperor sent his reckless telegram to President Kruger, congratulating him that he had repelled an invasion "without appealing for the help of friendly Powers," we showed by a naval review that we were ready for whatever might be inevitable. When Chamberlain assured Russia that "who sups with the devil must have a long spoon," he did not hasten to apologise, in the manner of our present demagogues. "What I have said I have said"—these were the only words of explanation that he vouchsafed.

Above all, he defended the Englishman abroad with a vigour which had gone out of fashion since the days of Palmerston. He did not subscribe to the creed, once popular at the Colonial Office, that the man on the spot is always wrong. He said what was to be said in favour of Cecil Rhodes, whose genius he gladly recognised, even in the dark days which followed the Raid. "I am perfectly convinced," said he, "that while the fault of Mr Rhodes is about as great a fault as a politician or statesman can commit, there has been nothing proved — and in my opinion there exists nothing —which affects Mr Rhodes' personal position as a man of honour." Those who served the Empire when Chamberlain was at the Colonial Office, served it with a glad heart, because they knew that the worst construction would not be put upon their patriotism, that they were assured in advance of the sympathy which Downing Street had long withheld. It was fortunate, then, that when the war came, in Chamberlain's despite, that a strong man ruled at the Colonial Office. He talked and acted with a firmness which must have surprised those Boers who remembered Gladstone. "Speaking for the Government," he exclaimed, "I say that so far as in us lies there shall be no second Majuba. Never again, with our consent, while we have the power, shall the Boers be able to erect in the heart of South Africa a citadel from whence proceed disaffection and race animosities. Never again shall they be able to endanger the paramountcy of Great Britain. Never again shall they be able to treat an Englishman as if he belonged to an inferior race."

When the war was brought to an end Chamberlain set an example which it were well if his successors followed: he paid a visit to South Africa. He studied the problems of Empire on the spot, and with his mind still open to new impressions, saw what was necessary to bind more closely the dominions oversea to the mother country. "Yes," he said once, "I am a political visionary; I dream dreams of Empire; my waking thoughts are taken up

with it." His dreams were practical; it was upon the combining of facts that he exercised his vivid imagination. He took up the cause of Tariff Reform, because he thought it beneficial to the Empire, with the courage of a young man. That he might be free to preach what he believed to be the only true gospel, he resigned his position in the Government, and let his voice be heard in all the great cities of the kingdom. He saw that all was not well with British industry. "Agriculture has been practically destroyed," he said; "sugar is gone; silk is gone; iron is threatened; cotton will go." He would save our trade as well as forge a link between England and her dominions. He counted the cost and faced it with equanimity. "It will be impossible," he admitted, "to secure preferential treatment from the colonies without some duty on corn as well as other articles of food, because these are the chief articles of colonial produce. Whether this will raise the cost of living is a matter of opinion. But even if the price of food is raised, the rate of wages will certainly be raised in greater proportion." Thus he sets up the standard of revolt against the superstition of Cobden. He openly avowed that he did not believe in the bagman's millennium. Alas, he has left to others, as a noble heritage, the task of fighting the battle of prosperity and of the Empire!

The most energetic statesman of his time, Chamberlain did not hold the highest office in the State. He put his country above his own personal success, above the triumph of this or that party. He did what he thought right, regardless of the shallow thing called consistency, regardless of office, regardless of a partisan victory. He was, moreover, the most persuasive advocate of his time. He pleaded the cause which he espoused with a vigour and earnestness which were beyond cavil. A finished orator, he knew not only how to fit plain words to great occasions, but how to make the most effective use of voice and gesture. It has been said that he alone of his time has influenced a vote in the House of Commons by the mere use of his eloquence. He had no love of soft counsels or easy expedients. No path seemed too arduous for him, if only it led to the union and greatness of the Empire. He fought hard for what he believed right, and he fought without rancour. Accustomed to exchange shrewd blows with his adversaries, he cared not that he was the most bitterly assailed statesman of his time. Though he has died with his work no more than half done, he has bequeathed an example of courage, patriotism, and open-mindedness which assuredly has not been set in vain.

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